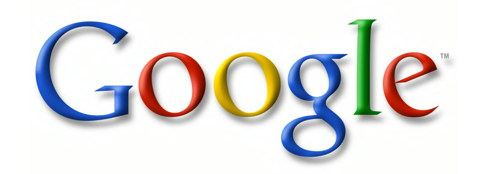
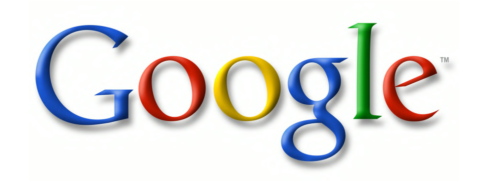
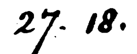
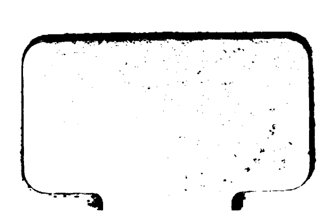












THE NATCHEZ.

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THE

NATCHEZ;

AN INDIAN TALE.

BY THE

VISCOUNT DE CHATEAUBRIAND,

AUTHOR OF

ATALA, THE BEAUTIES OF CHRISTIANITY,

TRAVELS IN THE HOLY LAND, &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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When the scorching dog-star engenders the pestilential south-wind in the seas of Mexico, this destructive wind puffs forth a damp and burning breath. Nature veils herself; objects are magnified; the scarlet light of the tropics is shed upon the waters, the forests, and the plains; clouds hang in enormous fragments at either horizon of the heavens; an everlasting noon of fire seems to have been suspended over the earth; and you are ready to imagine the conflagration of the universe to be near at hand: thus did the armies appear pausing one before the other, and ready to charge each other with fury. The sword of Chepar glistened.—Muse, sustain my voice, and rescue from oblivion the names of the warriors worthy of being known by posterity!

A white smoke, whence ever and anon darted flashes of fire, at first enveloped both armies. A smell of saltpetre, which excites courage, spread on all sides. Then were

heard the shouts of the Indians, the voices of the French chiefs, the neighing of horses, the whissing of balls, bullets, and bombs, which ascended with a light into the sky.

So long as the Natchez were supplied with powder and ball, their fire-arms, obtained from Europe, were incessantly flashing in the hands of their hunters; all the shots, directed by a practised eye, carried mourning into the bosom of some family. The fire of the French was less sure; the bombs crossed each other without effect in the air, like the feathered orb which children bandy to and fro. Folard was surprized at the inefficacy of his art, and Chepar at the resistance of the savages. But when the latter had spent the seeds of fire, which they had obtained from the people of Albion, Adario raised his voice.

"Young warriors of the tribes of the Serpent and the Beaver," cried he, "follow your fathers; they will open a way for you." At the head of the Sachems he rushed upon the

sons of Gaul. Outougamiz heard him, and turning to his companions: "My friends," said he, "let us imitate our fathers!" Followed by all the youths, he dashed upon the ranks of the French.

As two torrents produced by the same storm pour in parallel directions down the side of a mountain, and threaten the sea with their equal fury; so the two bodies of the Sachems and the young warriors attacked the enemy at the same moment; and as the sea repels those torrents, so the French army opposed a barrier to the assault of the two battalions. Then commenced an extraordinary combat. On one side all the art of the modern Bellona, as displayed in the plains of Lens, Rocroy, and Fleurus; on the other all the simplicity of ancient Mars, as he was seen marching on the hill of Fig-trees and on the banks of Simois. A brisk wind swept away the smoke, and exposed to view the field of battle. The difficulty of the ground, encum-

bered by overthrown forests, rendered skill unavailing, and allotted victory to valour alone; the horses, wedged between the trunks of the trees, tore their flanks or fractured their legs; the heavy artillery sank into the morass; farther on the lines of infantry, broken by the impetuosity of the savages, could not form again owing to the inequality of the ground, and the combatants fought every where man to man.

Now, O Calliope, who was the first of the Natchez that signalized his valour in this sanguinary conflict?

It was thou, magnanimous son of the great Siphane, terrible and unconquerable Adario.

The savages relate, that beneath the shades of Florida, on an island situated in the midst of a lake, which expands its waters like a veil of gauze, there is a wonderful fountain. The water of this fountain can straighten limbs bent by the weight of years,* and re-em-

* An historical tradition.

brown, at the fire of the passions, the hair on the hoary head of age. Eternal spring dwells around it: there the friendship between the elm and the ivy is ever new; there the oaks are astonished to count their years only by the age of the roses. The illusions of life, the dreams of youth, sport with the zephyrs among the leaves of the liane, which throw a net-work shadow over the crystal of the fountain. The vapours which rise from the surrounding woods are the perfumes of youth; the doves which drink of the water of this rill, the flowers which it irrigates in its course, have always eggs in their nests, and buds on their stems. Never does the orb of day set on its enchanted banks, and the sky there is always embellished by the smile of the dawn.

To this spring, the fame of which attracted the first Europeans to Florida, the Spirit of the country repaired, according to the account of the Natchez, to fetch some of its waters: in the middle of the combat he

poured a few drops of it on the head of the son of Siphane. The Sachem felt the blood of his early youth return into his veins: his steps became light, his arm supple, and his hand recovered the firmness of his heart.

In the French army there was a young man named Sylvestre, whom the sorrows of hopeless love had brought to these distant regions in quest of glory or death. The wealthy and inflexible Aranville would never consent to the union of his son with the indigent Isabelle. Adario perceived Sylvestre at the moment when he was striving to disengage his feet from a creeping vine: the Sachem, raising his club, aimed a blow at the head of the heir of Aranville: the scull was shattered like a calebash under the feet of a restive mule. The brains of the unfortunate youth reeked as they bespattered the earth. Adario insulted his foe in these words:

"Indeed 'tis a pity that thy mother is not here! she would bathe thy brow with per-

fumed water. I, who am but a barbarian, have washed thy hair in thy blood. But I hope thou wilt forgive my feeble age, for I promise thee a tomb in the stomach of the vulture."

As he finished these words, Adario rushed upon Lesbin; he plunged his dagger between the third and fourth ribs into the region of the heart: Lesbin fell like a bull pierced with the stiletto. The Sachem set his foot upon his neck: with one hand he seized and pulled towards him the hair of the warrior, with the other he cut it off together with part of the scalp, and hanging the horrid trophy to his girdle, he assailed the brave Hubert who was waiting for him. Adario with vigorous knee dealt him a blow in the side, and while Hubert rolled in the dust, the Indian with his hatchet lopped off both his arms, and left him to expire roaring with agony.

Like a wolf, which, having whetted his appetite with a lamb, breathes nothing but

slaughter, the Sachem took aim at the ensign Gelloin, and with an arrow nailed his hand to the staff of the French colours. He then wounded Ademar, the son of Charles. A native of the banks of the Dordogne, Ademar had been brought up with the utmost tenderness by an aged father, whose sole support he was, and whom he maintained with the honourable pay of his profession. But Charles was never more to clasp his son in his arms on his return from distant countries: the Sachem's hatchet, striking Ademar in the face, carried away part of his forehead, nose, and lips. The soldier stood for some time a ghastly sight to his horrified comrades: such is the appearance of a birch-tree which the Savages have stripped of its bark in spring; the naked trunk, stained with red sap, may be perceived at a distance among the trees of the forest. Ademar fell on his mutilated face, and everlasting night closed around him.

Like a wild sow of Cilicia, or a tigress of

the desert of Sahara defending her young, Adario, whose fury redoubled at the sight of his own achievements, exclaimed: "Thus shall ye all perish, base strangers! such is the fate reserved for you by the Natchez!" At that moment he snatched a musket from Kerbon, and plunged the bayonet into his mouth: the triple-edged weapon pierced the palate, and came out at the top of the scull of the pale victim, whose eyes opened and shut with difficulty. Adario left the weapon with the corpse, which propped each other up, and remained standing like the two legs of a pair of compasses.

Lifting an enormous stone, such as two Europeans could scarcely carry to mark the bounds of certain sports at some public festivity, the Sachem discharged it as lightly as an arrow, at the son of Malherbe. The stone rolled and broke the legs of the soldier: he fell head foremost to the ground, and in his agony bit the bloody grass. O Malherbe!

the scythe of death cut thee off in the flower of thy years. But so long as the Muses shall possess the power of enchanting men, thy name shall live like those of thy compatriots on whom thy illustrious grandsire conferred immortality!

Which way soever he turned, Adario cleared himself a passage with his hatchet, club, dagger, or arrows. Geblin, intoxicated with glory, d'Assas, with the heroic name, the imprudent d'Estaing, who would have dared defy Mars himself, Marigni, Comines, St. Alban, succumbed to the son of Siphane. Inspirited by his example, the Natchez came on bellowing like wild bulls and bounding like leopards. The earth was flayed by the trampling of the furious warriors; clouds of dust spread a new night over the field of battle: the faces of the soldiers were begrimed, their arms broken, their garments torn, and the sweat ran in streams from their brows.

Heaven then sent a panic among the French. Febriano, who was fighting in front of the Sachem, was the first to betake himself to flight, and the soldiers, forsaken by their chief, broke their ranks.

Adario and the Sachems rushed into them with a noise resembling that of the waves dashing against the blackened piles planted before the walls of a maritime city. Chepar, from the top of a hill, beheld the defeat of the left wing of his army: he ordered Artaguette to bring up his grenadiers. At the same time Folard, having contrived to save a few pieces of cannon, placed them upon an open height, and began to play upon the Sachems.

Thou, O valiant brother of Celuta, didst foresee the intention of the commander of the French, and to save the fathers of thy people, didst rush, supported by the young Indians, upon the chosen troop. Thrice did the companions of Outougamiz endeavour to break

the battalion of grenadiers, thrice was their force repelled by the impenetrable mass.

"O Spirits!" cried the friend of René, addressing himself to heaven, "if ye deny us victory, grant us death!" and he attacked Artaguette.

Two coursers, sons of the winds, burning with love for the same filly, as soon as they descry each other at a distance in the plain, bound neighing to the fight. Their inflamed breath mingles together; they rear upon their hinder legs; they close; each covers the other's mane with foam and blood, and they mutually strive to worry one another. Suddenly loosing their hold, they charge anew; turning their rumps and erecting their bristling tails, they fling up their heels into the air: sparks fly from the iron semi-circles which covers their murderous hoofs. Thus fought Artaguette and Outougamiz; thus flashed the blades of their weapons. The fire directed by Folard obliged them to separate,

and threw the ranks of the young Natchez into disorder.

"Tribes of the Serpent and of the Tortoise!" exclaimed the brother of Celuta, "withstand the attack of Artaguette, while I go with the allies to take those engines of thunder."

He spake: the allied warriors followed him two by two, and advanced towards the hill where Folard awaited them. Intrepid Savages, if my strains are destined to descend future ages, if I have received a spark of the Promethean flame, your glory shall live among men so long as the Louvre shall overlook the waters of the Seine, so long as the nation of Clovis shall continue to be the first nation in the world, so long as the memory of those peasants who have just renewed the miracles of your hardihood in the fields of La Vendée shall survive. *

* It will be obvious from this passage, at what period this book was written.

Outougamiz began to ascend the hill; but presently he disappeared in a torrent of fire and smoke: thus Hercules mounted to Olympus in the flames of his funeral pile; thus Œdipus, on the Brazen Way and near the temple of the Eumenides, was rapt by a storm to the abode of the gods. Nothing could stop the Indians, whose danger became more imminent the nearer they approached to the destructive machines. At every step death swept off some of the assailants. Tansou, who delighted to carry a bow of cedar, was struck by a ball in the middle of his body; he was cut in two like an ear of corn snapt off by the hand of a child. Kiousse, who was on the point of binding himself by the ties of Hymen, and had already extinguished the torch in the cabin of his mistress, had his swift feet suddenly shattered; he fell from the top of a rock into a slough, where he sunk up to the waist; Tani was struck on the head, which, being carried away, was left

hanging by the hair to the flowery branch of a maple.

Of all these warriors Sepine followed Outougamiz with the greatest ardour: this hero was descended from Œkala, who had reigned over the Seminoles. Œkala had three sons: Nape, who outstripped the roebuck in running; Teran, who married Nitianis, a union which the Spirits rendered barren; and Scoute, the last of the three children of Œkala. By the chaste Nubila Scoute had the charming Elisoë and the bold Aldsinape, the father of Sepine. This daring savage had promised to bring his mother the scalp of the French commander; but he had neglected to offer sacrifices to the Spirits, and he was not destined to return to the cabin of his fathers. A ball struck him on the lower part of the body: thrown to the ground he rolled upon his entrails. His friend Talaza held out his hand to assist him to rise;

but another ball carried away the helpful arm, which was dashed against Outougamiz.

There were now left but sixty warriors of the band which attempted to climb the hill of thunder: these reached the summit. Outougamiz, forcing his way through the bayonets which Folard opposed to his efforts, was the first to rush upon one of the guns; he cut off the head of the Cyclop, who was about to apply the match, clasped the tube, and called the Savages to his aid. Here ensued a tremendous carnage of French and Indians. Folard shouted to the former: "What a disgrace for you, if ye are conquered!" Outougamiz cried to the latter: "Courage for a moment longer, and victory is our's!"

The blood that fell on the heated machine for the possession of which the hostile parties were contending, was heard hissing as it dried up and evaporated. The discharges of the musketry and batteries made the hill a frightful chaos. Such are the roaring, the dark-

neis, and the lightnings of Etna, when the volcano awakes: an iron sky, whence fall showers of ashes, descends over the gloomy land, amidst which the mountain burns like a funeral torch: rivers of crimson fire furrow the moving plains; men, cities, edifices disappear, and Vulcan, vanquishing Neptune, makes the sea boil over his glowing furnaces.

All the horrors of war were assembled about the cannon which the brother of Céluta had seized. The Indians strove to move the heavy mass, and to throw it from the top of the hill: some laid hold of it by its yawning mouth; others exerted all their strength to push the wheels, which left deep ruts in the earth; these turned against the French the arms which they had wrested from them, those staid to be cut in pieces at the gun, which was bespattered with marrow and reeking brains, bits of flesh and fragments of bones. Each soldier begrimed with gunpowder, was covered with the blood of friends and

fots. They caught each other by the hair; they attacked with feet and hands; such as had lost their arms fought with their teeth: it was like a revel of death. By this time Febriano was wounded, and already had the heroism of a handful of Savages foiled all the art of Europe, when a grenadier applied a match to the tube. The brazen serpent instantly disgorged its entrails with a last roar: its destiny was accomplished; it burst, overthrew, mutilated, killed, the greater part of the warriors who surrounded it. Nought was heard save a single shriek: an appalling silence succeeded.

Thus two mighty fleets, disputing the empire of Neptune, meet at the mouth of the ancient Egyptus; the fight begins at nightfall. A ship presently takes fire at her crackling stern; by the light of the moving conflagration the sea may be discerned looking like blood and covered with wrecks: the coast is lined by the nations of the desert; the vessels,

either dismasted, or cut down to the level of the waters, lie-to as they burn. All at once the ship on fire roars: her enormous carcase bursts, and projects to heaven iron tubes, blazing timbers, and the carcases of her crew: night and silence rest upon the waves.

Outougamiz alone was left of all his band after the explosion. He would have rushed among the French; but the Spirit of friendship in the recesses of his heart addressed to him this reprimand: "Whither art thou running, madman? Of what benefit can thy death now be to thy country? Reserve this sacrifice for a more favourable occasion, and remember that thou hast a friend." Moved by these tender sentiments, the son of Tabamica bounded from the top of the hill, plunged into the river, and, refreshed by the coolness of its waters, rejoined the warriors who were still engaged with Artaguette.

The Sachems, not less prudent than intrepid, apprehensive lest their retreat might

be cut off, had joined the battalions of their sons. Thus united, they were scarcely able to withstand the efforts of Beaumanoir, who, on the part of the French, won the honours of the day. Beaumanoir had for his ancestor that renowned Breton knight, who drank his blood in the battle of the Thirty. Twelve generations separated Beaumanoir from that illustrious source: Etienne, Mathieu, Charles, Robert, Geofroy, the second Etienne, Paul, François, who died at Jarnac, George, surnamed *le Balafré* (the gashed), Thomas, François, the second of the name, and Jean the hermit, who dwelt in the castle whence may be seen the detached hill * which is crowned by the ruins of a Druidic temple.

Armed with a club, like his enemies, Beaumanoir made havoc among the ranks of the Natchez: Adario could scarcely withstand his fury. The aged Nabal; the wealthy Lipoé, who possessed two hundred beaver-skins,

* Mont-Dol.

from which love causes them to issue—so were Nipané and his sons.

At the moment when the three brothers were about to attack Beaumanoir, Beaumanoir rushed upon them as the hawk pounces upon doves. Nipané, who was watching the motions of the French warrior, advanced to succour the objects of his vigilant affection. Deprived of a victory, which he considered as sure, the Breton warrior turned upon the Sachem, and felled him with his club.

At the sight of Nipané extended on the earth, the Natchez set up a shout; Tapitien, Massinaïke, and Ossani discharged their arrows together at the assailant of their father. Beaumanoir stooped to avoid the winged death, and dashing upon the three young savages, sacrificed them to his fury.

Nipané, recovering from his stupor, the blood oozing from his eyes and nostrils, could not, happy in his misfortune, perceive his sons extended at his side. "O my chil-

dren!" he exclaimed with a dying voice, "save my body from the rage of the French. Is there any thing more lamentable than a Sachem overthrown by Areskoui? His enemies number his gray hairs, and insult his corse; 'Fool,' they cry, 'why didst thou leave thy oaken staff?' They strip him and jest among themselves over the inanimate remains of the veteran." Nipané expired, addressing himself in vain to his sons, and on his arrival in the realm of death, he groaned at meeting with those very sons who had gone thither before him.

The high-priest, bearing a lighted torch, rallied the savages round the body of Nipane. Adario and Outougamiz lifted the corse; but Beaumanoir, laying hold of the Sachem with one hand, obliged him to loose his prey, while with the other he brandished his club. Adario drew back and parried the blow. Heaven then marked at once the term of the glory and the life of Beaumanoir. With a

stroke of his hatchet Adario cleft the side of his enemy; the Breton felt the air enter his lungs by an unknown way, and his heart palpitate uncovered. His eyes turned white; his lips were convulsed; his teeth gnashed; the club dropped from his hand; he fell; life forsook him, and his limbs grew stiff in death.

Adario darted upon Beaumanoir to secure his scalp. "Come on, Natchez!" cried he, "Nipané is avenged!" The savages set up loud shouts, and returned to the attack. On the part of the French, the drums beat a charge, and the music and the clarions rent the air: Artaguette made his grenadiers advance with fixed bayonets to protect the body of his brave comrade. The affray was horrible. Lameck received a sword wound below the ribs, as he was seizing the corpse of Beaumanoir by the heels. The membrane enclosing Lameck's intestines was broken; they sank into the groin, which was swollen like a water-skin. The Indian swooned with

excessive pain, and his eyes closed in everlasting sleep.

The fate of the noble Yatsi was not less deplorable; this warrior was descended from the Yendat kings who had reigned over the great lakes. When the Iroquois invaded the country of his ancestors, his mother saved him in a bearskin, and carrying him across the mountains, she solicited hospitality at the hearths of the Natchez. Brought up in this strange country, Yatsi displayed, on reaching manhood, the generosity of a king and the valour of his forefathers. His hut was open to all the unfortunate, for he had been unfortunate himself: the wilderness contained not a more hospitable heart.

Yatsi perceived in the ranks of the enemy a Frenchman whom he had formerly received upon his mat: the son of exile, taking a calumet of peace at his girdle, advanced to renew the alliance of the cabin; but the Frenchman, not recognizing him, clapped a

pistol to his breast: he fired, and the ball lodged in the spinal marrow. Yatsi, overtaken by sudden night, rolled at the feet of his guest. His spirit, hovering upon his lips, was ready to fly to him who receives the weary traveller.

Transported with rage, Siégo, another exile from the forests of Canada, Siégo, who was born under a savanier (for his mother was overtaken by the pains of child-birth while repairing to the spring), Siégo resolved to take signal vengeance for the fate of his unfortunate friend. Rash man! he but hurried on to his own destruction: a ball fired at random burst the receptacle of the gall. The warrior instantly perceived an unusually bitter taste on his tongue: his expiring breath brought up, like the action of a pump, the blood which gushed from his lips. His knees tottered, and he slowly sank upon the unfortunate Yatsi, who, by a last convulsive struggle, clasped him in his arms: thus the

bee alights in the calyx of the wonderful dionæa, but the flower closes on the daughter of the sky and smothers her in a perfumed veil.

The Indians, in their turn, slew a multitude of Frenchmen, and weeded the field of battle. To the superiority of art they opposed the advantages of nature: their shafts were not so numerous, but better aimed. The climate was not oppressive to them; the spot on which they fought was one where they had practised the sports of childhood: every thing furnished them with a weapon, a rampart, or a support; they swam in the waters, they glided or flew upon the land. Sometimes concealed in the grass, at others, perched upon the oaks, they laughed at the balls which passed over their heads or beneath their feet. Their shouts, their songs, the sound of their chichikoues and fifes, denoted a different Mars, but a Mars not less formidable than that of the French. The cropped or turned-up hair of the Indians,

the feathers and ornaments which decorated them, the colours with which the faces of the Natchez were painted, the girdles, where glistened the hatchet or hung the club and the scalping-knife, formed a contrast with the European military equipments. Sometimes the savages attacked all together, filling the space between them and their enemies with heroic gestures and dances; at others they advanced one by one to combat an adversary whom they had singled out as most worthy to try their valour upon.

Outougamiz signalized himself afresh in this renewed conflict. You would have taken him for a warrior just come from the repose of his hearth, such were the strength and ardour which he displayed. The head of his hatchet was made of marble, ground with great care by Akomanda, the grandfather of the young hero. This marble had afterwards been inserted like a graft in the cloven stem of a service-tree: the shrub as it grew had

closed about the stone, and being cut to the length of an arrow, it had become an instrument of death in the hands of warriors.

Outougamiz, swinging the hereditary weapon round his head, launched it at Valbel; urging on its impetuous flight, it struck him below the left ear and dissevered the vertebræ. The soldier, a boon companion, drooped his head on his right shoulder, whilst his blood distained his arm and his bosom; you would almost have imagined that he had fallen asleep amidst spilt goblets of wine, as he loved to do in the orgies of a banquet.

The nimble savage followed the hatchet which he had thrown, picked it up, and dealt with it a tremendous blow to Bois-Robert, whose breast opened like that of a white victim under the sacrificial knife. Bois-Robert was grandson to the warrior who scaled the rocks of Fécamp. He numbered scarcely seventeen summers: his mother, seated on the shore of France, had long watched in

tears the vessel which bore away the darling of her affection. Outougamiz was suddenly struck by the paleness of the youth, and by the beauty of his light hair, which shaded a discoloured brow, and hung a second veil over eyes already covered by their long lashes.

"Poor nonpareil," said he, "who wast scarcely clothed with a light down, thou hast fallen from thy nest. No more shalt thou sing upon the bough. May thy mother, if thou hast a mother, forgive Outougamiz! The sorrows of a mother are very great. Alas! thou wast nearly of my age? And I too must die; but the spirits are my witnesses that I bore no hatred to thee; I have done this mischief merely in defence of the grave of my mother." Thus spake the simple and tender-hearted savage; tears trickled from his eyes. Bois-Robert heard his unaffected funeral eulogy, and, smiling, heaved his last sigh.

Whilst vanquished and victors, the French

and the Natchez continued the fight in all quarters, Chepar ordered the light dragoons to dismount, and to remove the trees and the dead, in order to open a passage for the heavy cavalry and the Helvetic battalion. This order was obeyed. The men rolled away with great exertion, or raised, by means of levers hastily constructed, the trunks of oaks, and the wrecks of guns and carriages; and a channel was opened for the waters with which the river had inundated the plain.

Peaceful beavers in sequestered valleys hasten to complete a joint work: some saw birch-trees and throw them down over the surface of the water, to form a dyke, others drag upon their tails the materials destined for the architects: the palaces of the Venice of the desert spring up; artisans of luxury cover the floors with fresh verdure, while builders construct agreeable country residences at some distance on the margin of the lake. Meanwhile old beavers, full of ex-

perience, direct the labours of the republic, cause magazines of provisions to be formed, place advanced sentinels for the public safety, reward industrious citizens, and banish idlers: thus did the French labour on the field of battle. At intervals rose pyramids, where the warriors cut off by the weapons of war were promiscuously piled: some had their faces turned to the ground which they pressed with their rigid arms; while the bloody hair of others streamed from the top of the funeral pyramids, as plants wet with dew droop from the sides of rocks; these were laid on one side; those had their haggard eyes upturned to the sky, and on their motionless features death had fixed the convulsions of departing life. Heads separated from bodies, and mutilated limbs filled the interstices of these trophies; clotted blood cemented the fearful monuments of the rage of men and the wrath of heaven. Very different are those heaps of grass and flowers which have fallen

before the scythe of the husbandman, raised in a smiling meadow, amid streams and delicious shades. Flora, with rake in hand, invites the swains to dance at the spring-tide festival; and the young damsels, with their companions, roll playfully from the top of the fragrant haycock.

The trumpet sounded and the cavalry dashed into the way that had been opened for it. A hollow noise issued from the ground, which trembled under the feet of the combatants. Batteries suddenly unmasked let loose all their horrors at once. Their thunders were multiplied by the echoes of the forests, and the Meschacebé responded to them by lashing his shores. Never had such uproar been heard since the day when Chaos, compelled to flee before the Creator, hurried to the confines of the worlds snatched from its bowels; a din more tremendous shall not burst upon the ear when the trumpet of the angel shall rouse the dead from the dust,

when all the graves shall open at once and give up their trembling inmates. The sun was darkened; the Indians indeed feared that it was about to be extinguished. Trembling on their bases the Andes shook their caps of ice, and the two oceans, heaving their tumultuous billows, threatened to break the isthmus which unites both Americas.

Causans, with his centaurs, plunged into the ranks of the Natchez. As in an infant colony a husbandman, borrowing of his neighbour a number of foals and their dams, drives them into a barn where the sheaves of corn are regularly spread; boys placed in the centre of the floor constrain the peaceful animals by their joyous shouts to trample the rustic wealth; a charming harmony prevails between the candour of the children, the innocence of the gifts of Ceres, and the agility of the foals bounding over the ears as they follow their dams: so Causans and his murderous horses trample under foot a harvest of heroes. And

as bees whose treasures a bear has discovered in the hollow of an oak fall upon the robber and pierce him with their stings, so did ye, O Natchez, with dagger in hand, resist the horsemen and their chief, son of the brave Henry and the beautiful Laura.

The horses, wounded with arrows, leaped, capered, shook their manes, rubbed their foaming mouths against their outstretched legs, or raised their bleeding nostrils towards heaven; still superb in their martial suffering, whether they had thrown their riders, or were bearing them through the field of battle.

From the ardour with which the combatants were animated, all the French and all the Indians might possibly have perished, had not Night, clothed in clouds and vapours, as when she would favour illicit love or the black designs of the assassin, suddenly arrived on the field of battle. The warriors could no longer see one another, and dealt only useless

blows in the dark. The heavens opened their flood-gates; a deluge, poured from the clouds, extinguished the fires of Mars. The winds rocked the forests; but this storm was without thunder, for Jehovah hath reserved for himself the treasures of the lightning and the hail.

The combat ceased: Chepar ordered a retreat to be sounded; the French army fell back confusedly in the dark, and retired towards its entrenchments. Each chief, with his troops, took the way which he deemed shortest, while straggling soldiers fell down precipices or were drowned in the torrents.

Rending her veil and hushing her winds, Night then shed an unsteady light on the field of battle, on which the Indians remained scattered. Brief gleams of moonshine shewed trees broken by bombs and balls, corses floating in the flood produced by the Meschacebé; horses stretched on the ground or wandering at random, ammunition-waggons, gun-car-

riages and cannon overthrown, arms and colours abandoned, motionless groupes of young Savages, and a few solitary Sachems, whose bald and wet heads reflected a pale gleam. Thus when the Nile has overflowed its banks, from the top of the fortress of Memphis you descry amid the inundated plains a few half-uprooted palm-trees, ruins peering above the surface of the waters, and the gray summits of the eternal pyramids.

All that remained of the tribes presently retired towards the Groves of Death. Outougamiz, on entering the sacred enclosure, beheld a warrior covered with blood seated upon a grave. The brother of Celuta paused. "Who art thou?" cried he. "Art thou some warrior who has fallen this day beneath the tomahawk of Areskoui, in defence of the hearths of our fathers?"

The figure, inclined forward, returned no answer. The high-priest came up, and with certain conjurations approached the phan-

tom. The Savages followed. "A white man! a white man!" was all at once the cry.

Artaguette, wounded in the action, and having lost his way in the dark, had sought refuge at the graves of the Savages. Outougamiz recognized the Frenchman with whom he had fought, the Frenchman who had protected Celuta, the Frenchman who was the friend of René. Feeling for the misfortunes of Artaguette, and anxious to save him, he claimed him as his prisoner. "I will not," he cried, "suffer this supplicant to be burned. What! shall he in vain have solicited hospitality at the graves of our ancestors? Shall he in vain have sought peace at the place where all wars cease? And what would René, the adopted son of the wise Chactas, the friend who gave me the gold chain—what would he say of the country of the West? 'Go,' he would say to me, 'go cruel man, seek another companion to stray in the valleys; I will not hold intercourse with the vultures

which tear in pieces the unfortunate.'—No! no! I will not descend to the region of the dead with such a black bead in the necklace of my life."

Thus spake the brother of Celuta. The inexorable Adario ordered the white warrior to be seized and reserved for the torture by fire. Chactas had caused this horrid practice to be abolished, but the venerable Sachem was a prisoner at Fort Rosalie, and the exasperated Indians listened to the voice of revenge alone. The women who had lost sons in the battle surrounded the stranger with frightful howls: so the shades pressed around Ulysses in the Cimmerian darkness to quaff the blood of victims; so the Greeks sang about the pile of the daughter of Hecuba, whom they immolated to the manes of the merciless Achilles.

On a hill, at some distance from the field of battle, stood a sycamore, which crowned its top: it was the resort every night of thousands of pigeons which perched on its decayed branches. At the foot of this tree the commander of the French army resolved to pass the night, and to assemble a council of the officers to deliberate on the course that was now to be pursued.

The watch-fire was kindled; sentinels were posted at different intervals, and the chiefs met at the summons of Chepar. They formed a circle round the fire. The light of the flames shewed their harassed looks, begrimed faces, torn and blood-stained uniforms, half-broken weapons, battered helmets, hats perforated with balls, and all the noble disorder of those valiant captains; while the pigeons, faithful to their accustomed retreat, instead of being scared by the fire, came to repose with the warriors.

The unexpected resistance of the Savages had intimidated the commandant of Fort Rosalie: he began to fear that he had yielded too far to the interested spirit of the colonists. He had risked an action without precise orders to that effect from the governor of Louisiana, and before the arrival of the troops announced from Europe. A considerable number of his men and several officers had fallen on the field of battle, and he was alarmed at the absence of Captain Artaguette.

The chiefs assembled round Chepar were divided in opinion: some were for renewing the combat at day-break; others declared that the chastisement inflicted on the Savages was sufficiently severe: the object of the French, said they, ought to be not so much to exterminate those people, as to subdue them; the Indians would no doubt be disposed to an arrangement, and at any rate the suspension of hostilities would give the French time to receive reinforcements.

Febriano was not present at this council: his conduct on the field of battle made him afraid of meeting his valiant comrades: it was by secret communications with Chepar that the renegade hoped to recover his influence and reputation.

The watch-fire now emitted nothing but smoke: the dawn tinged the east; the birds began to sing, and the council had not yet adopted any resolution. All at once the call of an advanced sentry was heard; officers were seen running; the main guard fired the morning gun. A party of young Indians, headed by Outougamiz, whose valour had been the admiration of the French army, appeared at the post: these warriors halted at some distance; from their ranks advanced a young man, with pale visage, his head uncovered, wearing a French uniform stained with blood; it was Artaguette. He leaned upon the arm of a negro woman, who was

suckling an infant: he was received at the advanced guard; the Indians retired.

Being conducted to the general, Artaguette addressed the council in the following terms:

"I was wounded towards the end of the action, and the brave grenadier, Jacques, carried me out of the affray. Jacques was himself wounded; I insisted on his retiring; he obeyed my commands, but only with the intention of going in quest of succour for me. When night had put an end to the combat, I made shift to crawl to the cemetery of the Indians, which they call the Groves of Death: there I was found by the priest, and condemned to suffer the tortures prepared for prisoners of war. Outougamiz strove in vain to save me; his sister, not less generous, did what he was unable to accomplish. The Indian law permits a woman to deliver a prisoner, by adopting him either for her

brother or husband. Celuta broke my bonds; she declared that I was her brother; the other title she reserves, no doubt, for a man more worthy to bear it than I am.

"The Indians, whose adopted son I am become, have charged me with words of peace. Outougamiz, my savage brother, has escorted me to the advanced guard of our army; a negress, named Glazirne, whom I knew at Fort Rosalie, and who happened to be among the Natchez, aided me by the support of her arm to arrive in your midst. I will not tell the general that I was adverse to the war: it was for him in his authority and wisdom to decide what was most conducive to the service of the king; but I think that as the Natchez are this day the first to propose peace, the honour of France is saved. The Indians have granted me life and restored me to liberty. Chactas may be exchanged for me: I shall be proud to have served as a ransom for that illustrious old man."

The blood and the courage of Captain Artaguette were still more eloquent than his words: a flattering murmur of applause ran through the council. Chepar saw a way of extricating himself with honour from the dangerous track which he had entered: he declared, that since the Savages solicited a truce, he was ready to grant it, as he wished to teach them that none ever had recourse to his clemency in vain. Chactas, who was fetched from Fort Rosalie, concluded a suspension of hostilities, which was to last a year; and during that interval experienced Sachems and the principal of the French were to endeavour to settle the partition of the lands.

A few days sufficed for the burial of the dead: a virgin and vigorous Nature soon removed from the forests all traces of the fury of men: but in the mean time the old dissensions and animosities only kept increasing. All who had lost relatives or friends on the field of battle

thirsted for revenge: the Indians, emboldened by their resistance, were impatient to make themselves entirely free. The inhabitants of the colony, disappointed in their first hope, coveted more than ever the concessions which were withheld from them; and Chepar, mortified at having been foiled by Savages, inwardly vowed, when he should have collected fresh troops, to atone for the ill success of the hasty step which he had taken.

Meanwhile no accounts of the Sun and his army were received at Natchez: the messengers sent to the great chief, to inform him of the attack of the French, had not returned. Some uneasiness began to be felt, and Akansie was observed to be in extraordinary agitation.

All the affection of Celuta, who was no longer alarmed for Outougamiz, since he had come out of the conflict covered with glory, was now directed to the brother of Amelia.

Outougamiz would instantly have flown to join René, had he not been engaged, by command of the Sachems, in feasting the warriors of the allied tribes, who were present at the battle. "Be not alarmed," said Outougamiz to his sister, "my friend will have triumphed like me: it is to his Manitou that I owe the victory; mine will preserve him from every danger."

Outougamiz judged from the strength of his friendship of the power of his guardian spirit: he judged wrong.

One night an Indian, detached from the camp of the Sun, announced the return of the tribe of the Eagle. The news spread throughout the huts; their inmates assembled under a tree, by the light of torches, to hear the shouts of arrival. Outougamiz and Celuta were the first at the place of meeting.

The shout, indicative of the approach of the warriors was presently heard: every ear listened intently, every mouth was opened,

all eyes were fixed, and every face was marked by the mingled emotions of fear and hope.

The shout of approach was followed by the shouts of death. Chactas counted aloud these shouts, which were repeated as many times as the army had lost warriors: the nation answered with an exclamation of sorrow. Each family enquired if it had not furnished some victim for the sacrifice; if a father, brother, son, husband, lover, had not descended to the region of souls. Celuta trembled, and Outougamiz appeared petrified.

Shouts of war succeeded the shouts of death: they announced the number of scalps won, and prisoners taken from the enemy. As these shouts of war exceeded the shouts of death, an exclamation of triumph reverberated in the forests.

The tribe of the Eagle then appeared and filed off between two rows of torches. The spectators sought to discover their good or ill fortune: it was seen at once that the old Sun

was not there; and Outougamiz and his sister missed the brother of Amelia. The fainting Celuta was with difficulty supported in the arms of Outougamiz, who was not less thunderstruck than she. Mila hid herself, saying: "I charged him not to die."

Ondouré, who succeeded the Sun in the command of the warriors, marched with a victorious air. He saluted the female chief, who, instead of rejoicing at the accession of her son to the supreme power, seemed to be agitated by remorse. Chactas, apprized of what was passing, assumed a look of mingled sorrow and austerity.

As the troops advanced towards the great village, the chiefs addressed a few words to different families: "Thy son behaved in the battle like an untamed buffalo," said a warrior to a father, and the father replied: "It is well." "Thy son is dead," said another warrior to a mother, and the weeping mother replied in the same words: "It is well."

The council of the Sachems assembled: Ondouré, being summoned before this council, gave an account of the expedition. According to his statement, the Natchez had met the Illinois coming to attack them: in the battle, which was the result of this meeting, the Natchez had proved victorious, but unfortunately the Sun had fallen, pierced with an arrow. "As to the guilty cause of this war, he has been taken prisoner by the enemy, and is now suffering the torments due to his sacrilege."

Ondouré would fain have accused his rival of cowardice, but René, who was thrice wounded in defending the Sun, had so publicly displayed his prowess in face of the Savages, that Ondouré himself was obliged to bear witness to his valour.

"Having thus become the chief of the warriors," he resumed, "I should have followed up my victory, had not one of your messengers brought me intelligence of the

attack of the French; I gave orders for retreat, and hastened back to the defence of our hearths."

While Ondouré was speaking, the female chief exhibited symptoms of extraordinary agitation: she became red and pale by turns. From a few words which had dropped from her guilty lover, when marching against the Illinois, Akansie had no doubt that the arrow which dispatched the aged Sun had been discharged by the hand of Ondouré. The criminal himself soon came and boasted to the jealous Indian, that he had hastened the commencement of the young Sun's reign. "My passion for thee," said he, "has perhaps carried me too far; now dispose of me, and think only of establishing thy power." Ondouré hoped through the influence of the female Chief to obtain the appointment of Edile, and to govern the nation as guardian to the youthful sovereign.

The death of the old Sun produced a re-

volution in the state: in him expired one of the three aged chiefs who had abolished the tyranny of the ancient despots of the Natchez. There were now left only Chactas and Adario, both of whom were on the brink of the grave.

Chactas had some suspicions respecting the mode of his friend's death. They were not told on what part the arrow had struck the venerable chief; his body was not brought back, though his followers had won the victory. A report was current among the warriors of the tribe of the Eagle, that the Sun had been wounded in the back, that he had fallen on his face, and that after the white warrior had long defended him as he lay prostrate on the ground, both had been taken alive by the enemy.

This report was too well founded: such indeed was the horrid truth; René and the Sun had been made prisoners. The Illinois consoled themselves under their defeat with

the idea that the Great Chief of the Natchez was in their power: and, not being pursued in their retreat, they carried off their victims without molestation.

After a month spent in marching, resting, and hunting, they arrived at their great village, where the prisoners were to be put to death. With a refinement in cruelty particular attention had been paid to the wounds of the Sun and the brother of Amelia; and the prisoners were guarded night and day with that vigilance with which the demon of barbarity inspires the American tribes.

When the Illinois came in sight of their great village, they halted to prepare for a triumphant entry. The chief of the troops advanced first, setting up the shouts of death. Next came the warriors, two by two, leading by a rope René and the Chief of the Natchez, half-naked, and their arms bound above the elbow.

In this manner the train proceeded to the

village-green, where a concourse of people was already collected. They crowded and danced about the old Sun and his companion: so in an autumnal evening innumerable swallows fly in all directions around a solitary ruin; so the inhabitants of the waters sport in a golden ray which penetrates the waves of the Meschaçebé, while the flowers of the magnolias blown off by the breeze fall in a shower on the surface of the stream.

When the army and all the Savages had assembled at the place of torture, the high-priest gave the signal for the prelude to the torments, called by the horrible Athaënsie * *the fondling of the prisoners.*

The Indians, ranged in two lines, immediately struck with cedar staves the chief of the Natchez, who walked leisurely between his executioners, like a river which slowly pursues its course between verdant banks. René expected to see their victim fall; he knew

* Revenge.

not that these adepts in the art of tormenting forebore to strike the vital parts in order to prolong their pleasure. "Venerable Sachem," said the brother of Amelia; "what is to be our fate! As for me, I am young; I can suffer: but you!"

"Spare thy pity," replied the Sun, "I need it not. Think of thyself: muster all thy strength. I shall be tortured first, because I am an oak whose top is withered, and will burn rapidly. I hope to give a flame the light of which will shine upon my country and re-kindle thy courage."

After the aged warrior had been thus treated, the young Frenchman had to endure the like barbarity: the two prisoners were then conducted to a hut, where all sorts of attentions were lavished upon them, and they were supplied with all kinds of gratifications. So the Canadian bird of Minerva breaks the legs of her victims, and feeds them in her nest

during the fine weather, that she may devour them at leisure in the inclement season.

"Night came on. René, covered with wounds, was lying upon a mat at one extremity of the hut. Guards were stationed at the door. A female clad in white, with a crown of yellow jasmine on her head, advanced in the dark; she wept audibly. "Who art thou?" said René, raising himself with difficulty. "I am the Virgin of the last Love,"* replied the Indian. "My parents have demanded the preference for me; for they hate Vinclao, to whom I am attached. It is for this reason that I weep at thy pillow. My name is Nelida."

"The kisses of a mouth which is not loved," answered René in the language of the Savages, "are thorns which pierce the lips. Nelida, go seek Vinclao; tell him that the stranger from the land of the sassafras has

* For an explanation of this custom, see the episode of *Atala.*

paid respect to thy love and thy misfortune." At these words the daughter of the Illinois exclaimed: "Manitou of the unfortunate, hear my prayer! Grant that this prisoner may escape the fate destined for him. He has waved his right to my person! May his beloved be faithful to him as the mate of the halcyon, which carries into the sunshine her partner languishing under the weight of years!"

As she finished these words the Virgin of the last Love took the jasmine flowers which covered her hair, and laid them on René's brow:—extraordinary manners, the web of which seems to have been woven by the Muses and the Furies!

"Crowned by thy hand," said the young man to Nelida, "the victim will be more agreeable to the Great Spirit." René had long been weary of life; content to die, he offered to heaven the torments which awaited him in expiation of those of his Amelia.

At that moment the guards entered, and the daughter of the Illinois withdrew.

The hour of torture arrived. The Indians related that the affrighted orb of light remained in the bosom of ocean, and that Athaënsie, the goddess of revenge, alone illumined nature on that day. The prisoners were led to the place of execution.

The chief of the Natchez was bound to a stake, at the foot of which was collected a heap of bark and dry leaves: the brother of Amelia was reserved for the last victim. The high-priest appeared in the midst of the circle formed about the stake: he held in his hand a torch, which he shook, dancing at the same time. He presently set fire to the heap: the spectator might have taken it for one of the sacrifices offered by the ancient Greeks on the shores of Hellespont; Mount Ida, Xante, and Simois mourned Astyanax and the reeking ruins of Ilium.

They first burned the feet of the venerable

man, who sat as quiet in the fire of the pile as if he had been sunning himself at the door of his hut. The Sachem sang amid the tortures which were conducting him to the grave, as the husband repeats the hymeneal strain while approaching the nuptial couch. The exasperated tormentors exhausted the fertility of their infernal ingenuity. They thrust burning pine splinters into the wounds of the friend of Chactas, crying: "Now give us light, brilliant star!" As the sun crowning his brow with the softest splendour, so did the radiant victim appear to the Illinois.

Athaënsic breathed her fury into their hearts: a sorcerer, whom a she-wolf had suckled in a cavern of Niagara, rushed upon the Sachem, stripped the scalp from his head, and put hot ashes on the bare scull of the venerable man. Pain prostrated the chief of the Natches at the feet of his enemies.

Soon recovering from a swoon for which he was angry with himself, and snatching a

fire-brand, he called and defied his persecutors: * entrenched in his pile, he struck terror for a moment into a whole army. A false step again gave him up to the inventors of torture: they fell upon the veteran. The hatchet dissevered those feet which visited the huts of the unfortunate, those hands which dressed their wounds. The yet living trunk was rolled upon the fire, the heat of which served to cicatrize the wounds of the victim, while the blood reeked on the glowing coal like incense in a sacrifice.

The chief had not yet succumbed; he still kept off with his looks the nearest warriors, and made his executioners draw back. Less terrible is the serpent, whose rings the traveller has cut off with a knife: the mutilated dragon writhes at the feet of its foe, blowing its poison at him, threatening him with its fiery eyes, its triple tongue, and its long hisses.

* An historical fact.

"René," at length exclaimed the old man, with a voice which seemed to have acquired double strength, "I am going to rejoin my fathers. The actions which thou hast seen me perform were intended only to encourage thee to die, and to show thee of what man is capable, when he is resolved to exert all the energies of his soul. For the honour of thy new country, imitate my example."

He expired. He had completed a century: his antique virtue, so long cultivated on earth, expanded in the rays of eternity, like the American aloe, which, after the lapse of a hundred springs, opens its blossom to the smiles of the dawn.

The fortitude of the chief of the Natchez had exasperated the fury of the Illinois. "If," cried they, boiling with rage, "we could not extort one bellow from this old

buffalo, here is a young stag which shall make us amends for our trouble." Women, children, Sachems, were all eager for the new sacrifice: the Spirit of revenge smiled at the torments and tears which he was preparing.

On an American plantation, governed by a humane and liberal master, numerous slaves industriously collect the berries of the coffee: boys plunge them into basins of pure water; young African girls stir them with a rake to separate the crimson pulp from the valuable kernel, or spread the rich crop upon hurdles. Meanwhile the master walks beneath orange-groves, promising love and rest to his slaves, who make the air ring with the songs of their country: so eagerly did the Illinois throng to reap before the face of Athaënsic a fresh harvest of torments. In a short time the work was finished, and the brother of Amelia, being stripped by the immolators, was bound to the sacrificial pillar.

At the moment when the torch was lower-

ing its fiery hair to kindle the bark, volumes of smoke rose from the neighbouring huts: amid confused cries was heard the war-whoop of the Natchez; a party of that nation was spreading conflagration among the Illinois. Terror and consternation seized the assembly surrounding the brother of Amelia; the sorcerers betook themselves to flight; the women and children followed, the people dispersed without heeding the voices of the chiefs, without collecting to defend themselves. Profiting by the panic with which they were struck, the little band of the Natchez penetrated to the very theatre of blood. A young chief, hatchet in hand, headed his companions. Need we name him? It was Outougamiz. He flew to the pile and cut the cords which bound his friend.

He forcibly suppressed all the effusions of pity that were ready to burst from his soul. Nothing was yet accomplished; René was not saved: the delay of a single moment

might be his destruction. On recovering from their first alarm, the Illinois perceived the small number of the Natchez; they assembled with shouts, and surrounded the little band of deliverers. The efforts of this band opened a way for it: but what can twelve warriors effect against a host of enemies! In vain did the Natchez place the brother of Amelia in their midst; he was so crippled by his wounds that he could scarcely walk; his hands, pierced by an arrow, could not wield the hatchet, and he was ready to sink at every step.

Outougamiz took the brother of Amelia on his shoulders: the sacred burden seemed to have given him wings: the brother of Celuta glided over the grass; neither the sound of his step nor the murmur of his breath was to be heard. With one hand he held his friend, with the other he struck and fought. As he proceeded towards the neighbouring forest, his companions fell one after another

by his side: when he had reached it with René, they alone were left.

Night had already fallen: already had Outougamiz penetrated into the thickest of the underwood, where, depositing René upon the long grass, he lay down beside him. He soon heard footsteps. The Illinois lighted torches which illumined the darkest recesses of the forest.

René was about to express his tender admiration to the young savage, but the latter stopped his mouth: he well knew the acute sense of hearing possessed by the Indians. He rose, found with joy that Amelia's brother had regained some strength, girt his loins with a cord, and hurried him away to the foot of a hill which overlooks a morass.

In this morass the unfortunate friends sought shelter. Sometimes they plunged up to the waist in the mud which bubbled about them; at others they scarcely shewed their heads above the surface of the bog. They

forced their way through the aquatic plants which entangled their legs like cords, and at length reached some tall cypresses, on the knees * of which they rested themselves.

Shifting voices were heard about the morass. Warriors were saying to each other: "He has escaped!" Several asserted that a Spirit had delivered him. The young Illinois mutually upbraided one another, while Sachems assured them that they would find the prisoner again, since they were in his track; and they urged on their dogs among the reeds. The voices were thus heard for some time: by degrees they became fainter, and were at length lost in the depths of the forest.

The cold breeze of dawn chilled the limbs of René: his wounds were lacerated by the bushes and briars, and an icy dew dripped from his naked body; fever insinuated itself

* The thick roots of the bald cypress which appear abov ground are termed *knees*.

into his bones, and his teeth began to chatter with a sinister sound. Outougamiz again took René in his arms, and warmed him at his heart, and when the sun's rays had pierced the vault of the cypresses, they found the savage still clasping his friend in his embrace.

Mother of sublime deeds! thou who, since Greece ceased to be, hast taken up thine abode on the Indian graves in the wilds of the New World; thou who, amid these deserts, art full of grandeur because thou art full of innocence—sacred Friendship! lend me thy most energetic and most simple language, thy most melodious and most touching voice, thine exalted sentiments, thine immortal fire, and all the ineffable things which proceed from thy heart, to sing the sacrifices which thou canst inspire! Oh! who will conduct me to the plain of the Rutuli, to the tomb of Nisus and Euryalus, where the Muse still administers comfort to faithful spirits! Tender divinity of Virgil, thou hast

but to sigh forth the death of two friends: I have to relate their unfortunate life.

Who shall tell the affectionate tears of Amelia's brother; who depict his trembling lips on which his soul hovered; who represent Outougamiz beneath a cypress, among the reeds, with his Manitou of friendship, his golden chain, fastened by a triple knot over his bosom, Outougamiz supporting in his arms the friend whom he had rescued, that friend covered with mire and blood, and consumed by a burning fever! Let him who can express it delineate the look of those two men, when contemplating each other in silence, feelings of heaven and of wretchedness were blended on their brows. O Friendship! what are empires, love, glory, all the joys of earth, compared with a single moment of this painful bliss!

Outougamiz, from that instinct of virtue which imparts an intuitive perception of guilt, had given little credit to the statement

of Ondouré; and his doubts were strengthened by what he learned from several warriors. At any rate René was either slain or a prisoner, and he was bound either to bestow on him the rites of burial or to rescue him from the flames.

Outougamiz concealed his intention from Celuta; he communicated it to none but a few young Natchez, who agreed to accompany him. Stripping himself of all his apparel, he retained nothing but a girdle, that he might have no incumbrance: he painted his body with a dark colour, armed himself with a poniard and a tomahawk, fastened the gold chain about his neck, hung small loaves of maize flour at his side, slung his bow over his shoulder, and rejoined his comrades in the forest. He stole away with them in the dark: on reaching the Bayouc des Pierres, he crossed it, gained the opposite bank, imitated the cry of the beaver that has lost her young, bounded off, and was lost in the desert.

For eight whole days he marched or rather flew without intermission—for him there was now neither sleep nor rest. Might not the moment when he should close his eyes be the very moment that should deprive him of his friend? No obstacles, neither mountains, precipices, nor rivers, could detain him: you would have taken him for a lover seeking to rejoin the object which attracts him, regardless of the impediments which oppose his passage. If excessive fatigue overcame the brother of Celuta, if in spite of himself he felt his eyes grow heavy, a voice issuing from among flames seemed to ring in his ears: "Outougamiz! Outougamiz! where is the Manitou which I gave thee?" At this inward voice he shuddered, rose, kissed the gold chain, and pursued his route.

The tardy return of the Illinois to their villages gave Outougamiz time to arrive before the consummation of the sacrifice. This Savage was no longer the simple, the credu-

lous Outougamis: from his resolution, his address, the sagacity with which he had foreseen and calculated all circumstances, he would have been taken for an experienced chieftain. He saved René, but with the loss of his noble companions, a band of friends who offered to friendship this magnanimous sacrifice; he saved René, and hurried him away into the morass—but how many dangers yet remained to be overcome!

The spot where the two friends first rested being too near the bank, Outougamiz resolved to seek refuge beneath another clump of cypresses which grew amidst the waters: when he would have put this design into execution, he became fully aware of his distressing situation. A piece of a maize loaf had not recruited René's strength; his pains were aggravated, and his wounds had opened afresh; a violent fever preyed upon him, and his sufferings alone shewed that he still lived.

Overwhelmed with grief and exertion, and

enfeebled by the almost total privation of food, the brother of Celuta needed himself those attentions which he lavished on his friend. Still he yielded not to despair: his soul, expanding with dangers, rose like an oak, which seems to grow perceptibly in proportion as the storms of heaven accumulate about its head. More ingenious in his friendship than an Indian mother, who collects moss to make a couch for her infant, Outougamiz cut rushes with his dagger, constructed with them a kind of boat, in which he laid the brother of Amelia, and, swimming himself, drew after him the frail bark laden with the treasure of friendship.

Outougamiz had been ready to die with grief; but when he reached the cypresses, he was as near expiring with joy. "Oh!" cried he, then for the first time breaking silence, "he is saved! Delicious necessity of my heart! poor fugitive dove, thou art now safe from thy pursuers. But René, I fear that

thou wilt not forgive me, for 'tis I who am the cause of all this, as I was not with thee in the battle. How could I leave my friend, who had given me a Manitou on the spot where I was born! It was wrong, very wrong of thee, Outougamiz!"

Thus spake the Savage: the simplicity of his language, in contrast with the sublimity of his actions, roused René for a moment from the stupor of pain. Raising a feeble hand and his dim eyes, he could but pronounce the words: "Forgive thee!"

Outougamiz went beneath the cypresses: he cut off the boughs which hung too low; he cleared the knees of those trees of the relics of branches: he there made a soft bed with tops of rushes, full of light pith; then carrying his friend to this bed, he covered him with dry leaves. Thus a beaver, whose first labours have been overflowed by the waters, takes her young one, and removes it to the highest apartment of her mansion.

The next care of the brother of Celuta was to dress the wounds of the sufferer. He separated two joints of reeds, took up in them a little water of the lake, poured it from one cup into another to purify it; and washed the wounds, from which he first sucked the poison. The hand of a son of Esculapius, furnished with the most ingenious instruments, would not have been either more tender or more salutary than the hand of this friend. René could not express his gratitude except by the motion of his lips. From time to time the Indian anxiously said to him: "Do I hurt thee? Dost thou feel a little easier?" René intimated by a sign that he did feel easier, and Outougamiz continued his operation with delight.

The Savage never thought of himself: he had still a remnant of maize, which he reserved for René. Outougamiz merely obeyed a sublime instinct, and with him the most meritorious actions were but the accomplishment

of the faculties of his life. As a charming olive-tree, reared among streams and shades, drops unconsciously at the pleasure of the breeze its ripe fruit on the flowery turf; so did this child of the American forests sow at the breath of friendship his virtues upon the earth, without suspecting what valuable presents he was conferring on mankind.

Refreshed and relieved by the attentions of his deliverer, René's eyelids closed, and Outougamiz himself fell into a profound sleep by his side: angels watched the rest of these two men, who had found favour in the sight of him who slept on the bosom of John.

Outougamiz had a dream: a young female appeared to him: she leant as she walked on an unbent bow, entwined with ivy like a thyrsus: she was followed by a dog. Her eyes were blue; a sincere smile parted her rosy lips: her air was a mixture of energy and grace. Almost naked, she wore only a cestus more beautiful than that of Venus. Outou-

gamiz dreamt that he addressed her in these words:

"Stranger, I planted a maple in the soil of the hut in which I was born: see how during my absence wicked Manitous have wounded its bark and made the sap flow from it. I am seeking herbs in this morass to heal the wounds of my maple. Tell me where I shall find the leaf of the savin."

With a calm voice the damsel seemed to return this answer to Outougamiz. "Indeed, I say, he must be versed in all the arts of wisdom who can penetrate the secrets of your friendship. Fear nothing, I have in my father's garden herbs for curing all sorts of trees, and particularly wounded maples."

As she uttered these words, which Outougamiz heard, as he imagined, the Indian maiden of his dream assumed a look of majesty: her head was crowned with rays; two white wings bordered with gold overshadowed her divine shoulders. The extremity of one

of her feet lightly touched the earth, while her body already floated in the transparent æther.

"Outougamiz," the brilliant vision seemed to say, "raise thyself by adversity. Let the virtues of nature serve thee as steps to ascend to the sublimer virtues of the religion of the man to whom thou hast devoted thy life; I will then return to thee, and thou mayst rely on the succour of the angel of friendship."

Thus spake the vision to the young Natchez as he lay buried in sleep. Ambrosial fragrance embalming the air all around, imparted strength to the soul of the brother of Celuta, like the sacred oil which makes kings, or prepares the spirit of the dying sinner for celestial bliss.

At the same time the dream became magnificent. The seraph, whose image it exhibited, thrusting the ground with his foot, like a diver ascending from the depths of the abyss, rose into the air. This calm virtue

moves not with the swiftness of the messengers charged with the dread behests of the Most High: his ascent to the region of everlasting peace was slow, solemn, and majestic. So in the plains of Europe a luminous globe formed by the hand of a child of Gaul, slowly pierces the vault of Heaven; and in the realms of India, the bird of paradise floats on a golden cloud in the liquid azure of the firmament. Outougamiz awoke; the voice of the heron proclaimed the return of dawn; the brother of Celuta felt himself quite recruited by his dream and his slumber. Having taken a few moments to collect his ideas, the Indian, calling to mind past perils and future dangers, rose to begin his day's work. He first examined René's wounds, rubbed the benumbed limbs of the paitent with a bunch of aromatic herbs, divided with him a few bits of maize bread, changed the rushes of the bed, renewed the air by shaking the boughs of the cypresses, and replaced his

friend on fresh reeds: you would have taken him for an industrious matron putting her hut in order in the morning, or a mother bestowing tender attentions on her son.

These duties of friendship being performed, Outougamiz next thought of decorating his person, before he proceeded to the execution of the plans which he meditated. He looked at himself in the water, combed his hair, and tinged his colourless cheeks with the carmine furnished by a costly species of chalk. In undertaking his heroic enterprize this Savage had forgotten every thing but the festive vermilion; thus blending the man and the child, infusing the gravity of the one into the frivolities of the other, and the simplicity of the latter into the occupations of the former. So, on the tree of Atalanta, the fragrant bud which serves to adorn the young damsel, swells beside the golden apple which refreshes the lips of the weary traveller.

Nature had placed in the heart of Outou-

gamiz the intelligence which she has put into the heads of other men: the divine breath imparted to Pythia less clear and distinct views of the future than the Spirit which actuated him disclosed to the brother of Celuta, of the misfortunes that might befal his friend. Grappling with Time, body to body, Friendship compelled this mysterious Proteus to reveal to it his secrets.

Outougamiz, having taken his weapons, said to the new Philoctetes, whom, however, the friendship of the wilderness, more faithful than that of palaces, had not betrayed: "I will go and seek the gifts of the Great Spirit, for thou must live, and I too must live. If I had nought to eat, I should famish, and my soul would soon be in the realm of souls. And what then wouldst thou do? I see thy feet to be sure, but they are motionless: I see thy hands, but they are cold and cannot grasp mine. Thou art far from thy forest and thy haunt: who would supply the

wounded ermine with food, if the beaver who accompanies her were to die? She would droop her head, her eyes would close, her strength would forsake her: the hunters, finding her at the point of death, would say: 'See here the wounded ermine far from her forest and her haunt!'"

At these words the Indian proceeded into the cypress grove, but not without turning his head several times towards the spot where reposed the life of his life. He kept talking to himself and saying: "Outougamiz, thou art a roebuck without understanding; thou art not acquainted with plants, thou dost nothing to save thy brother." He shed tears on account of his inexperience; and upbraided himself bitterly for being of no use to his friend.

Long did he seek about in the morass for salutary herbs: he found some cresses and killed a few birds. On his return to the asylum consecrated by friendship, he per-

ceived at a distance the rushes scattered and tossed about. He approached, called, felt the bed, lifted up the reeds: the brother of Amelia was not there!

Outougamiz stood aghast. Ready to dash his head against the trunks of the cypresses, he exclaimed: "Where art thou? Hast thou fled from me as from a false friend? Who then hath given thee feet or wings? Is it Death that has snatched thee away?"

While the Savage was giving vent to his transports, he heard, as he thought, a noise at some distance. He was silent, held his breath and listened; he then plunged all at once into the water, ran, swam, ran again, and soon perceived René faintly struggling with an Illinois.

Outougamiz set up the shout of death: the effort which he made as he darted forward was so prodigious, that his feet rose above the water. He was presently upon the foe, overthrew him, and rolled with him

among the mud and reeds. So two bulls meeting in a marsh where there is but one place at which they can quench their thirst, lower their horns; their bristled tails are twisted into a circle; they dash their heads together; they bellow with rage; they splash the water with their feet; and their brows and flanks are bathed with sweat. Outougamiz was victorious; he bound his prisoner securely with twisted roots to the foot of a tree, and laid beneath the same tree the friend whom he had once more saved.

By the violent shocks which the brother of Amelia had sustained his wounds were opened afresh. The Natchez, in the first moment of his vengeance, was on the point of dispatching his foe.

"What!" said he, "couldst thou be so cruel as to drag away this enfeebled stag? Had he been in his strength, cowardly enemy, with a single butt he would have broken thy

buckler. Well dost thou deserve that this hand should scalp thee."

Outougamiz paused, as if struck by a thought. "Hast thou a friend?" said he to the Illinois. "I have," replied the prisoner.

"Thou hast a friend!" rejoined the brother of Celuta, approaching and eyeing him with scrutinizing look: "tell me not a lie!"

"I speak the truth," answered the Illinois.

"Well!" cried Outougamiz, sheathing his poniard, after holding his ear to the little gold chain; "well, thou hast to thank this Manitou, which has just forbidden me to kill thee. It shall not be said that Outougamiz, the Natchez, of the tribe of the Serpent, ever parted two friends. What would have become of me, hadst thou robbed me of René! Ah! I should then be but a solitary roebuck! Thou seest, O Illinois! what thou hadst well nigh made me! And should thy friend be so? should he go alone murmuring thy name

in the wilderness? No! he would be too unfortunate! and should I be the cause!"

The savage immediately cut the bonds of his prisoner. "Be free," said he; "return to the other half of thy soul, which is, perhaps, seeking thee as I just now sought my crown of flowers, when thou hadst been so barbarous as to tear it from my hair. But I rely on thy honour: thou will not reveal my retreat to thy countrymen. Thou wilt not say to them: 'Under the cypress of friendship Outougamiz the Simple hath hidden the flesh of his flesh.' Swear by thy friend that thy lips shall remain closed as the two shells of a walnut which the harvest moon has not fully ripened."

"I, Nassouté," replied the stranger, "swear by my friend, who is to me like a balsam when I have a pain at my heart, I swear that I will not reveal thy retreat, and that my lips shall remain closed as the two shells of a wal-

nut which the harvest moon has not fully ripened."

At these words Nassouté was about to retire, when Outougamiz stopped him and said: "Where are the Illinois warriors?"—"Dost thou imagine," replied the stranger, "that I am base enough to inform thee?" Brother of Celuta, thou rejoinedst: "Return to thy friend: I was laying a snare for thee; if thou hadst betrayed thy country, I should not have believed thy oath, and thou shouldst have fallen by my hand."

Nassouté departed. Outougamiz went to attend the brother of Amelia, as if nothing had happened, and as if there was no reason to doubt the faith of the Illinois, since he had taken the oath of friendship.

Some days elapsed: René's wounds began to heal; the contusions were less painful; the fever abated, Amelia's brother would have recovered more rapidly, had he enjoyed the benefit of an abundant supply of food; but

Outougamiz could scarcely find a few wild berries: at length even these failed, and Celuta's brother had no other resource than to try the last efforts of friendship.

One night he stole away from the morass, concealing his intention from René, and leaving here and there parcels of reeds floating to mark his route, if the Spirits should permit him to return. He ascended the hill through the wood, and discovered the camp of the Illinois, into which he resolved to penetrate.

Fires were still burning; most of the families lay sleeping about them. The young Natchez, having tied up his hair after the fashion of the hostile warriors, approached one of the fires. He perceived a buck half skinned, the flesh of which had not yet crackled over the coals. Outougamiz cut out with his dagger the tenderest parts, as coolly as if he had been preparing a feast in the hut of his fathers. Here and there were,

nevertheless, to be seen some of the Illinois, who, having awoke, were laughing and singing. The matron of the fire from which the brother of Celuta was stealing part of the victim, likewise opened her eyes, but taking the stranger for the young son of her bowels, fell asleep again. Some hunters passing near the friend of René, wished him a blue sky, a beaver-skin cloak, and hope. Outougamiz in a low tone returned the salute of hospitality.

One of them halting, said to him: "'Tis wonderful how he escaped!"—"A Spirit, no doubt, carried him away," answered the brother of Celuta.—"He is concealed in the morass," rejoined the Illinois; "he cannot escape, for he is surrounded on all sides; we will drink out of his skull."

While Outougamiz was engaged in this perilous conversation the voice of a woman was heard at some distance. She sang: "I am the wife of Venclao. My breast, with its

rose-bud, is like the down of the swan, which the arrow of the hunter hath stained in the middle with a spot of blood. Yes, my breast is wounded, for I cannot succour the stranger who spared the Virgin of the last Love. Would that I might at least save his friend!" The woman ceased, then approaching the Natchez in the dark, she thus resumed:

"The nonpareil of Florida conceived that winter had changed its attire, and that it should not be known among the eagles of the rocks in whose domains it had sought food; but the faithful dove discovered it, and said: 'Flee, imprudent bird, the sweetness of thy song hath betrayed thee!'"

These words struck the brother of Celuta. He raised his eyes and observed the tears of the young woman; at the same time he caught a glimpse of armed warriors approaching. Throwing part of the spoil upon his shoulders, he slipped away in the dark, cleared the wood, entered the mazes of the morass, and

after some hours of fatigue and danger rejoined his friend.

An ingenious evasion served to conceal his dangerous adventure from René; the next thing to be thought of was how to prepare the banquet: by day the smoke might be seen, by night the fire might betray them. Outougamiz, however, preferred the night, hoping to devise some means of masking the glare of the flame.

When the sun had sunk below the horizon, and the last tints of day had disappeared, the Indian drew a spark from two cypress branches by rubbing them together, and kindled a few leaves. All went right at first; but some dry reeds lying too near the spot caught fire, and gave a great light. Outougamiz endeavoured to throw them into the water, and only extended the flames. Leaping upon the burning heap, he sought to extinguish it with his feet. René exhausted his reviving strength to assist his friend. Their efforts were vain;

the fire spread, ran crackling along the dry tops of the rushes, and communicated to the resinous branches of the cypress. The wind rose; volumes of smoke, sparks, and flame ascended into the air, and the sky assumed a crimson hue. One vast conflagration covered the morass.

How were they to flee? how escape the terrible element, which, after retiring from its centre, approached it again and threatened the two friends. The bundles of reeds on which the brother of Celuta might still have attempted to remove René to some other part of the morass, were already consumed. Should he endeavour to cross to the neighbouring desert? were not the cruel Illinois encamped there? Was it not probable that, attracted by the fire, they were closing all the outlets? Thus, when we think we have arrived at the height of wretchedness we discover still severer afflictions awaiting us: it is difficult

for the son of woman to say: "This is the last degree of misery."

Outougamiz was almost overcome by fortune; all that he had previously done was now frustrated. He had saved his friend from the flames merely to burn that friend with his own hand! "René," he exclaimed, in a voice of anguish, "it is I who am sacrificing thee! How unfortunate thou art to have had me for thy friend!"

The brother of Amelia with feeble arm and pale hand tenderly pressed the Savage to his bosom. "Canst thou suppose," said he, "that it would not be a pleasure to me to die with thee? But why shouldst thou go down to the grave? Thou art strong and active; thou canst make thy way through the flames. Hasten back to thy forests; the Natchez need thy heart and thine arm: a wife and children will embellish thy days, and thou will forget a baleful friendship. As for me, I have no country, no relative on earth:

a stranger in these wilds, my death or my life is of no consequence to any one. But thou, Outougamiz, hast thou not a sister?"

"And has not that sister," replied Outougamiz, "cast looks of tenderness on thee? Art thou not enfolded in the recesses of her heart? Why hast thou disdained her? What dost thou advise me? To forsake thee? And since when have I proved to thee that I was more attached to life than thyself? Since when hast thou seen me agitated at the mention of death? Did I tremble when amidst the Illinois I broke the bonds which held thee? Did my heart throb for fear when, with pangs which I would not have exchanged for all the joys of the world, I bore thee away on my shoulders? Yes, this heart did throb indeed, but it was not for myself! And still thou canst say that thou hast not a friend! I forsake thee! I turn traitor to friendship! I be happy without thee with a wife and children! Tell me then what I shall say to

Celuta when I reach my home. Shall I say to her: 'I saved him for whom I summoned thee as a witness of friendship; the rushes caught fire; I was afraid and fled. I watched at a distance the flames which consumed my friend.' Thou declarest René that thou knowest how to die; I, for my part, know how to live. Wert thou in my place and I in thine, I should not have said, 'Flee and leave me! I should have said, Save me, or let us perish together!'"

Outougamiz had uttered these words in a tone that was not common with him. The language of the noblest passion had burst in all its magnificence from the lips of the simple Savage. "Stay with me!" exclaimed, in his turn, the brother of Amelia: "I no longer urge thee to flee. Thou art not made for such counsels."

At these words a serene and ineffable expression was diffused over the face of Outougamiz, as if heaven had opened and the

divine radiance was reflected by the brow of the brother of Celuta. With the sweetest smile that the angel of virtuous friendship ever placed on the lips of a mortal, the Indian replied: "Now thou speakest like a man; I feel in my bosom all the pleasures of death."

The two friends, ceasing to oppose their unavailing efforts to the conflagration, or to attempt an impracticable retreat, sat beside each other awaiting the accomplishment of their destiny.

The flames returning to the spot where they commenced, had communicated to the cypress which served them for a shelter, and burning flakes began to drop upon their heads. All at once from among the masses of fire and smoke was heard a slight noise in the water. A figure appeared: the hair at its temples was consumed; its bosom and arms were scorched, whilst muddy water dripped from the lower part of its body. "Who art

thou?" cried Outougamis. "Art thou the spirit of my father, come to seek and to conduct us to the land of souls?"

"I am Venclao," answered the phantom, "the friend of Nassoute, to whom thou hast given life, and the husband of Nelida, that Virgin of the last Love whom thy friend spared. I am come to pay my two-fold debt. The flames have betrayed your retreat; the tribes of the Illinois surround the morass; several warriors are already swimming to get at you; I have outstripped them. Nassoute is waiting for us at that part of the shore which he is appointed to guard. Let us hasten away."

Venclao passed his vigorous arm under that of Amelia's brother, and made a sign to Outougamiz to support him on the other side. Thus entwined, all three plunged into the pool; they advanced through tracts of burning reeds, sometimes threatened by the fire, at others ready to be engulphed by the water. Every moment the danger became more im-

minent: voices and cries were heard on all sides. Such were the perils which beset Æneas, when in that fatal night for Ilium, he went by the light of the flames, through solitary and circuitous streets, to conceal on Mount Ida the ancient gods of antique Troy, and the future deities of the Roman Capitol.

Outougamiz, Venclao, and René, reached the spot where Nassoute awaited them. The brother of Amelia was immediately placed on a litter of boughs, which Venclao, Nassoute, and Outougamiz carried by turns. With hasty step they left the fatal morass behind them: all night they pursued their course through the silence of the forests. On the appearance of the first rays of dawn, the two Illinois stopped. "Natchez," said they to the two hostile warriors, "pray to your Manitous: flee. We have repaid your kindness. Being quit with you, we now owe ourselves to our country. Farewell."

Venclao and Nassoute set down the litter

with the wounded man, and putting a staff of holm-oak into the left hand of Amelia's brother, they gave Outougamiz certain medicinal plants, some maize-flour, and two bear-skins, and departed.

The two fugitives pursued their way. René slowly walked first, bending on the staff, which he lifted with difficulty; Outougamiz followed, sprinkling dry leaves, to conceal the traces of their passage. The inmate of the forests shows less skill in deceiving the eager hounds than did the Indian in disguising the foot-marks of René, in order to save him from the pursuit of the enemy.

Having reached a heath, Outougamiz all at once said: "I hear hasty steps;" and presently a band of Illinois appeared at the horizon towards the north. The unfortunate couple had time to gain a narrow wood which bordered the other extremity: they entered, and having crossed it, they found themselves on the very spot where the battle so fatal to

the Great Chief of the Natchez and to Amelia's brother had been fought.

Scarcely were the two friends on the field of death when they heard the enemy in the neighbouring wood. "Lie down on the ground," said Outougamiz to René; "I will be with thee again presently."

René had become careless of life; he was weary of struggling so long for a few wretched days; but still he was obliged to follow the injunctions of friendship. His indefatigable deliverer covered him with the frightful wrecks of the combat, and rushed himself into the recesses of a forest.

When boys have discovered the place where the nightingale has built her nest, the mother with plaintive cries and drooping wings flutters, as if hurt, before the young robbers, who go in pursuit of her, and are thus led away from the frail pledge of her love; so the brother of Celuta, raising his voice in the wilderness, called the foe to that side, and drew them

away from the treasure dearest to his heart than the egg full of hope to the enamoured bird.

The Illinois could not overtake the nimble Savage, to whom friendship had for a moment restored all his vigour. They were approaching the country of the Natchez, and not daring to proceed farther in that direction they relinquished the pursuit.

The brother of Celuta then went to release René from the hideous ruins which had protected his youth and beauty. The two friends resumed their route at day-break, after washing themselves in a limpid stream. It appeared that the ice-cold relics beneath which René had preserved the spark of life, were those of two Natchez, Aconda and Irinée. The brother of Amelia recognized them, and, struck with this extraordinary circumstance, he said to Outougamiz:

"Seest thou those disfigured bodies, torn by the eagles, and stretched unhonoured on

the ground? Aconda and Irinée, ye were two friends like us; like us, too, ye were young and unfortunate! I saw you perish, and when stricken to the earth I strove to defend you." This very night, Outougamiz, thou didst trust thy living friend to the care of two deceased friends. They were revived by the fire of thy soul to afford me their protection."

Outougamiz wept over Aconda and Irinée, but he was too weak to dig them a grave.

As husbandmen after a long day of sweat and toil drive their weary oxen home to their cottage; already do they fancy that they descry its humble roof; already do they see themselves surrounded by their wives and children: so the two friends, on approaching the country of the Natchez, began to feel hope spring up again in their hearts; their wishes overleaped the space which still separated them from their homes.

These illusions, like all the illusions of life, were of short duration.

The strength of René was once more nearly exhausted, and to aggravate their distress, nothing was left of the gifts of Venclao and Nassoutte.

Outougamiz himself was overcome; his cheeks were hollow; and his emaciated and trembling limbs could scarcely support his body. Thrice did the sun return to give light to men, and thrice did he find the travellers crawling over a heath which afforded no resource. The brother of Amelia and the brother of Celuta had ceased to speak; they merely stole sidelong and painful glances at each other. Sometimes Outougamiz still endeavoured to assist the progress of René: so twins who are beginning to walk, support one another with their feeble arms, and practice their unsteady steps under the guidance of their fond mother.

From the spot which the friends had

reached to the country of the Natchez was but a few hours' journey; René was, nevertheless, obliged to stop. Encouraged by Outougamiz, who conjured him to proceed, he tried to advance a few steps, that he might not seem voluntarily to deprive his magnanimous friend of the fruit of so many sacrifices: his efforts were unavailing. Outougamiz attempted to carry him on his shoulders, but he bent and fell under the burden.

Not far from the beaten track murmured a stream: René approached it, crawling on his hands and knees and followed by the weeping Outougamiz: thus the afflicted herdsman accompanies the kid which has broken one of its slender legs by falling from a lofty rock, and limps along towards the fold.

The stream marked the margin of the savannah which extends to the Bayouc des Pierres, and which has no other bounds on

the east than the woods of Fort Rosalie. Outougamiz seated his companion at the foot of a willow. The young savage fixed his eyes on the land of his fathers, to which he was now so near. "René," said he, "I see our hut!"

"Turn my face that way," responded the brother of Amelia. Outougamiz did so.

For a moment the brother of Celuta had thoughts of proceeding to Natchez and obtaining assistance; but fearing lest the man of his heart might expire during his absence, he resolved not to leave him. Seating himself beside René, he clasped his head in both hands, and drew it gently upon his bosom; then bowing his face over his friend's, he prepared to catch his last sigh. As two flowers on the same stem, which have been scorched by the sun, so did these two young men appear bending one over the other.

A slight noise and a breeze impregnated with fragrance caused Outougamiz to raise

his head: a female stood by his side. Notwithstanding the paleness and the disordered dress of this female, the Indian could not but recognize her. Outougamiz, from surprise and joy, loosened René's head. "Sister!" he exclaimed, "is it thou?"

Celuta started: she had approached the two friends without perceiving them: the sound of her brother's voice astonished her. "Brother!" replied she, "my brother! the Spirits have borne him away! The white man has expired in the flames! To these bounds I repair every day to wait for the travellers; but they will never come back!"

Outougamiz rose and advanced towards Celuta, who would have fled, had she not remarked with profound pity the faltering step of the warrior. You should have seen the face of the Indian maid expressing alternately emotions of the deepest terror and the liveliest hope. Celuta still hesitated, till she observed the Manitou of friendship fastened

about the neck of her brother. She then flew to Outougamiz, whom she at once embraced and supported. "I have saved him!" cried Outougamiz; "there he is! but he must die if thou hast no food for him."

Love heard the voice of friendship. Celuta was already on her knees; timid and trembling she raised the head of the dying stranger. René himself had recognized the daughter of the wilderness, and his lips essayed to smile. Outougamiz, his head inclined on his bosom, and dropping his clasped hands, said to her: "Ah, sister, witness of the oath of friendship, thou seest whether I have faithfully kept it. I ought to have brought back my friend full of life, and here he is expiring! I am a bad friend, a warrior without strength. But hast thou not something to revive my friend?"

"I have nothing," cried Celuta despairingly. "Oh that he had been my husband, and I had borne him a pledge of love, he might then have drunk with his child at the

fountain of life!" Divine wish of the lover and the mother!

The chaste Indian maiden blushed, as though she feared that René had understood her. With her eyes fixed on heaven, she looked as if inspired: had you seen her, you would have said that Celuta, under an impassioned illusion, imagined she was suckling both her infant and the father of her infant.

O Friendship, who hast related to me these wonderful things, why, as I had the heart to feel, hast thou not conferred on me the talent to portray them?

When Celuta found the two friends on the banks of the stream, she had been wandering for several days in the forest. At the news of the captivity of René she had been seized with a burning fever; the sudden departure

of Outougamiz aggravated the affliction of the unfortunate maiden, for she guessed that her brother had flown to the deliverance of his friend. Might not he too have fallen a victim to the rage of the Illinois?

The daughter of Tabamica had obstinately persisted in remaining alone in her hut. One day, as she lay stretched on the mat of pain, Ondouré entered. The success of this man had inflated his pride; his vices were augmented by all the hope of his passions. Being now sure of Akansie, who knew and was profiting by his crime, Ondouré already imagined himself to be in possession of the supreme authority, with the title of guardian to the young Sun; he meditated the re-establishment of the ancient tyranny; and he flattered himself that, after deceiving the French, he should find some means of destroying them.

One thing, and one only, threatend the ambition of the savage; this was a sentiment

stronger than that ambition itself, his ever-growing love for Celuta. Wounded vanity, the thirst of revenge, and the fermentation of the senses, had transformed this love into a sort of frenzy, the paroxysms of which were likely to rouse the jealousy of the female chief.

In the first exultation of his triumph, Ondouré therefore hastened to the dwelling of the sister of Outougamiz. He advanced to the couch on which the lonely virgin was languishing. "Awake, Celuta," said he, rudely shaking her hand. "Awake! here is Ondouré: art thou not too happy that a warrior like me still condescends to chuse thee for a mistress, thee, a rose blighted by the wretched White from whom the Manitous have delivered us?"

Celuta attempted to repel the barbarian. "How charming she is in her madness!" exclaimed Ondouré; "how ruddy her cheek! how beautiful her hair!" And the

savage would have lavished caresses on his victim.

At this moment Akansie, who, from a jealous instinct, frequently hovered about the hut of her rival, appeared on the threshold of the door. "Help, O help me, mother of the Sun!" cried Celuta. Ondouré loosed his prey, confounded, ashamed, stammering, he followed Akansie, who retired with fiery eyes and a soul shaken by the furies.

The female relatives of Celuta, who would have taken her under their care during the absence of her brother, returned to offer their assistance to their friend; they observed the disorder of her couch. Celuta kept her new vexations to herself; she affected to smile, and declared that she felt better: they believed her and withdrew. Relieved from attentions which were troublesome to her, the daughter of Tabamica rose at midnight, traversed the forests, and pursued her way towards the country of the Illinois, to await the

protectors whom she was going to meet, protectors whom she gave up for lost beyond retrieve, even at the moment while she was still seeking them.

Who shall save the three unfortunates? Celuta alone yet retained some strength; but has she time to fly back to the village of the Natchez? Will not René and Outougamiz have expired before she can return? She gently laid the head of René upon the moss and rose: Providence will have pity on so much misery. Warriors appeared towards the forest. Who were they? No matter! At that moment Celuta would have implored the succour of Ondouré himself.

"Whatever you be," cried she, approaching the warriors, "come and give life to René and my brother!"

Some soldiers and young officers belonging to Fort Rosalie accompanied Captain Artaguette to the stream beside which the two friends were lying, a stream which possessed

the virtue of healing wounds. Artaguette recognized by her voice the Indian maid, whom he should not have known again by her features, so much were they altered. "Is it you?" exclaimed the Captain in his turn; "my sister! my deliverer!"

Celuta flew to him; with tears of grief and joy she grasped the hand of her adopted brother, pressed it fervently to her lips, and strove to draw Artaguette towards the stream, repeating the names of Outougamiz and René: the troops hastily followed the steps of Celuta.

They presently discovered two men, or rather two spectres, the one lying on the ground, the other standing but ready to fall. They gathered round them. "Hunters," said Outougamiz, "I can now die; take care of my friend!" and he sank upon the turf.

It was believed in the colony, as well as among the Natchez, that René had been burned by the Illinois. All possible succou

was afforded to the two dying men; it was Celuta who offered the first nourishment to her brother and her brother's friend. Artaguette strove to support both with an arm that had not yet quite regained its strength. Jacques, the grenadier in attendance on the generous Captain, was dispatched to the Natchez to apprize them of the miraculous return. The warriors and the women hurried away and the Sachems followed. Already had the French interwoven boughs of trees and formed litters, on which the two friends were laid. Eight young officers carried by turns the sacred litters, as though they had borne trophies of honour. Beside these leafy beds walked Celuta, full of a happiness which she durst not believe, and Artaguette, whose pale brow indicated that his noble heart had not yet recovered all the blood which it had lost.

In this order the concourse of the Natchez met the triumphal pomp of friendship, con-

trived by the hands of valour. The forests rang with prolonged acclamations; the people crowded round, anxious to learn the minutest circumstances of a deliverance to which Outougamiz would scarcely allude, and which René was not yet able to narrate. The young men pressed the hand of Outougamiz, and vowed to each other a similar friendship in adversity. The Sachems told Adario and Chactas that they had illustrious children. "It is true," replied the old men: even Adario was affected.

The women and children caressed Celuta; Mila insisted on carrying her, though she felt somewhat sad amid the joy. In the general effusion of hearts, the French soldiers came in for their share of praise. "Sister," said Artaguette to Celuta, "your brother well sustains his part of deliverer." René overheard these words. "You know nothing of the matter," murmured he, in a dying voice: "Outougamiz will not tell you what

he has done, but I shall, if I live." All eyes shed tears also over the young Indians who had sacrificed themselves to the triumph of friendship.

Ondouré and Akansie alone were not present at this scene: the wicked shun as a punishment the sight of rewarded virtue. René was carried to the habitation of Chactas, his father; but Adario insisted that Outougamiz, his nephew, and Celuta, his niece, should be conveyed to his hut, that he might himself take care of the couple, whom he acknowledged to be worthy of his blood.

Ondouré had appeased Akansie by those falsehoods, those vows, and those caresses, which betrayed passion no longer believes, but to which it still yields as to its last resource. Those who have taken one step in guilt persuade themselves that it is impossible to recede, and give way to the fatality of evil: the female chief found herself obliged to further the plans of a villain, and to raise On-

douré to her own level, or to justify herself for having stooped to his. The return of René rekindled the flames of jealousy in Ondouré's heart: disappointed of his revenge, it became more necessary than ever for him to attain the supreme dignity, that he might execute as sovereign the crime which, as a subject, he had failed to consummate. He alarmed the female chief. "It is possible," said he, "that René may have seen me discharge the arrow: the only way to defy all danger is to raise ourselves above all power. Let me be guardian of your son; let the ancient guard of the Allouez be restored, and I will answer for the rest." Akansie could refuse nothing; she had given up her virtue.

The Indian, to make still more sure of success in his designs, first addressed himself to the French.

Febriano, though roughly treated by Chepar, had, by dint of humiliation, gradually recovered his ascendancy over the old soldier:

meanness uses affronts which it receives as a footstool by which to exalt itself. But the renegade felt that his influence must be shaken, if he could not find means to remove by some eminent service, the unfavourable impression left by his former counsels. The Governor of Louisiana had intimated his dissatisfaction to the commandant of Fort Rosalie; and in the letter in which he acquainted him with the dispatch of fresh troops, he exhorted him to make amends for an imprudence by which the colony was suffering.

Febriano, therefore, was watching for an opportunity of regaining his power at the moment when Ondouré was seeking the means of gratifying his ambition. These two traitors, formerly comrades in debauchery, had both, from a conformity of passions, conceived a violent hatred of René. The savage went in quest of the civilized man; he talked to him concerning the death of the Sun. "In the changes which are about to

take place among the Natchez," said he, "if the commander of the French will second me, I will enable him to obtain the concessions, the causes of so many troubles and misfortunes."

Delighted with a proposal which conferred consequence on him by rendering him useful, Febriano hastened to apprize Chepar, who agreed to meet Ondouré at midnight in one of the ravelins of the fort.

"Sachem of the French," said Ondouré, accosting him, "I know not what you are meditating. Fresh warriors have arrived: perhaps it is your intention to lift the hatchet once more against us. Instead of pursuing this uncertain track, you may, through my guidance, reach your goal by a surer way. I have long been a friend to the French: employ your authority in procuring my appointment to the post which will make me guardian of the young Sun. I will then engage to obtain for you the cession of the

lands which you claim, and the limits of which your deputies and ours are to settle. In two days the nomination of Edile will take place. Let presents be sent in your name to the young warriors, the matrons, and the priests, and I shall triumph over my competitors."

Flattered to find that his power was courted, considering it as a master-stroke of policy to place Ondouré, whom he took for a friend to France, at the head of the Natchez, hoping above all to make amends for his fault by obtaining the lands which were promised him, Chepar eagerly fell in with the plan of Ondouré: he entrusted Febriano with the distribution of the presents.

Ondouré returned to Akansie and found her, to his surprise, in deep dejection: guilt is like those nauseous potions which habit alone renders endurable. "'Tis now too late to hesitate," cried Ondouré, "wilt thou rule with me, or wilt thou remain a slave

under a Sachem of thy family? Recollect that thy life and mine are at stake: if we are not strong enough to proscribe our enemies, we shall be proscribed by them. Sooner or later some accusing voice will reveal the secret of the Sun's death, and, instead of rising to power, we shall be dragged to punishment. Go then, talk to the matrons; obtain their votes, while I hasten to ensure those of the young warriors. Outougamiz, who alone balances my influence with them, Outougamiz is still too weak to leave his hut. Let the sorcerer devoted to our interest expound the will of the Spirits, and we shall triumph over the opposition of Chactas and Adario."

The general assembly of the nation being convened to proceed to the election of Edile, Chactas proposed to raise René, his adopted son, to that important post; but the sorcerer declared that the stranger, who was at once the guilty cause of the disappearance of the sacred serpent, of the death of the female

beavers, and of the war in which the old Sun had perished, was displeasing to the Great Spirit.

On the rejection of the brother of Amelia Adario presented Outougamiz, his nephew, who had just displayed such virtue and valour: Outougamiz was discarded on account of the simplicity of his virtue. Chactas and Adario did not court for themselves an appointment the duties of which their age would not have allowed them to perform.

Akansie, in her turn, proposed Ondouré: this name brought blushes on the cheeks of those men who had still any modesty. Chactas opposed, with all the dignity of his eloquence, a warrior whose vices he fearlessly depicted. Adario, who scented the tyrant in Ondouré, threatened to stab him if he should ever assail the liberty of his country; but the presents of Febriano had produced their effect: the matrons, delighted with personal ornaments; the young warriors, seduced by

ants; and a considerable number of Sachems whose prudence was stifled by ambition, supported the candidate nominated by the female chief. The Manitous, being consulted, approved the election of Ondouré. Thus the education of a child, destined some day to rule the nation, was entrusted to sullied and oppressive hands: the empoisoned plain of Gomorrha kills the plant committed to it, or bears only such trees the fruit of which is full of ashes.

Meanwhile René's wounds healed: medicinal herbs, known to the Savages, restored his strength with astonishing rapidity. He had but one way of repaying the sublime debt of friendship which he owed Outougamiz, and that was to marry Celuta. The sacrifice was severe: all ties were irksome to the brother of Amelia: his heart was unsusceptible of passion; but he conceived that he ought to sacrifice himself to gratitude: at any rate

it was not in his opinion counteracting his destiny to find a misery in his duty.

He communicated his resolution to Chactas: Chactas solicited of Adario the hand of Celuta; Outougamiz was overjoyed to learn that his friend would soon be his brother. The blushing Celuta gave her consent with that modest grace which breathed in her; but she experienced something more than that pleasure which, mingled with fear, is felt by the young virgin on the point of being consigned to the arms of a husband. In spite of the love which attached the daughter of Tabamica to René, in spite of the happiness which she pictured to herself, she was seized with an involuntary sadness; a secret presentiment oppressed her heart: René excited in her a terror which she could not overcome; she felt that to sink on the bosom of that man was like falling into an abyss.

The relatives having approved the match, Chactas said to René: "Build thyself a hut;

take thither the collar for carrying burdens and wood for kindling fire; hunt for six nights; on the seventh Celuta will follow thee to thy home." . . . . .

René erected his habitation in a little valley watered by a tributary stream of the Meschacebé. When the work was finished, the eye from the door of the new hut overlooked the meads of the valley studded with flowering shrubs: a forest, coeval with the earth, covered the hills, and in the recesses of this forest roared a torrent.

The nuptials were celebrated with dances and sports. Placed in the midst of a circle of their relatives, René and Celuta were instructed in their duties: the young couple were then led to the dwelling in which they were to reside.

The dawn found them on the threshold of the hut: Celuta, with one arm entwining René's neck, leant upon the young man. The eyes of the Indian, with a look of respect and ten-

derness, sought those of her husband. With a religious and grateful heart, she offered her felicity to the author of nature, as a gift which she owed to him; so the dew of night re-ascends at sun-rise towards the heavens whence it fell.

With a vacant look the brother of Amelia gazed on the wilderness: his happiness resembled repentance. René had wished for a desert, a wife, and liberty: he possessed them all, and yet something poisoned this possession. He would have blessed the hand which at one blow should have relieved him from his past misery and his present felicity, if, however, it were felicity.

He strove to realize his old chimeras: what woman was more beautiful than Celuta? He conducted her into the recesses of the forests, and strolled, in the full consciousness of his independence, from solitude to solitude: but when he had pressed his young spouse to his bosom amidst precipices; when he had lost

himself with her in the region of the clouds, he found not the pleasures of which he had dreamt.

The void formed at the bottom of his soul could no longer be filled. René had been stricken by a decree of Heaven, which constituted at once his torment and his excellence; René carried trouble with him whithersoever he went: the passions issued from his heart, and could not return thither; he was a weight to the earth which he trod with impatience, and which bore him with regret.

Had the pitiless Ondouré been able to penetrate the heart of Amelia's brother, had he known all its wretchedness, had he witnessed the alarms of Celuta and the kind of fear which her husband excited in her, the union of the hapless couple would not have tormented the Savage as it did when rumour brought him intelligence of it. Ondouré had indeed gratified his ambition, but what cared he now for that? Celuta was snatched

from his love! René was not yet sacrificed to his jealousy! The success of the destestable Indian cost him dear: he was obliged to submit to the endearments of a woman whom he hated; he had made Chepar promises which he neither would nor could perform. How was he to destroy those strangers at Fort Rosalie, who had become his masters, since they were in possession of part of his secret; how sacrifice that rival whom evil Spirits had sent to the Natchez for the torment of Ondouré?

Several plans presently occurred to the mind of the Edile, but some of them were not safe enough, and others involved too few victims. Disgust of the state of nature, and a desire to possess the enjoyments of social life, aggravated the uneasiness of Ondouré: he devoured with his eyes all that he saw in the habitations of the Whites; he was seen wandering through the villages with a wild look,

a fiery eye, and lips quivering with a convulsive motion.

One day, while thus sauntering in his black reveries, he came to René's hut; the brother of Amelia was then traversing the wilderness with Celuta. A thousand passions, a thousand recollections, accompanied by a thousand mischievous schemes, agitated the heart of Ondouré. He first paced slowly round the hut, presently pushed against the door, opened it, and with sinister looks surveyed the interior of the place. He entered, and seated himself by the solitary fire, like those evil spirits attached to every man, and who, according to the Indians, love to haunt forsaken habitations. Beds of rushes, European arms, some veils such as women wear, a cradle, a present from the family of Celuta—in short, all that met the eye of Ondouré increased his torment. "Here it is, then, that they have been happy!" muttered he. His imagination was bewildered; he rose, scattered

the reeds of the beds, and broke the weapons, the splinters of which he flung to a distance. Celuta's veils next excited his rage: he took them up with trembling hand, lifted them towards his lips, as if to cover them with kisses, and then furiously tore them in pieces. His hands were already extended to seize the cradle, when he suddenly dropped them by his side: his head drooped on his breast; a dark cloud overcast his brow: the Savage seemed to be racked by the painful conception of a crime.

'Tis done! the fate of Celuta, the fate of Amelia's brother, the fate of the French, are fixed! Ondouré heaved a deep sigh, and smiling like Satan at his malignity, "I thank thee," said he, "O Athaënsic, for well hast thou inspired me! Spirit of this hut I thank thee! thou hast conducted me hither, to disclose to me the means of accomplishing my revenge, to attain at once the end of my various designs. Yes, ye shall perish, ene-

mies of Ondouré! and thou Celuta . . . . . ." He revealed not to himself all the horror and the full extent of his plan, except by a cry which he uttered as he left the hut; this cry was heard by Frenchmen and by Natchez: the former shuddered; the latter foresaw the ruin of their country.

When René returned from his excursion, he was struck by the disorder in his hut, without being being able to discover the cause: Celuta, brought up in the religion of the Indians, saw in this disorder a sinister omen. She had not brought back happiness from her pilgrimage in the desert: to her René was inexplicable; she had nevertheless perceived something mysterious lurking at the bottom of the heart of the man to whom she was united, but this man had not revealed his secrets to her; he had not told them to any one. After his return to the hut, René seemed to become more gloomy and less fond: the timid Celuta durst not question him, and she

began to take for satiety or inconstancy what was but the effect of misfortune and an impenetrable character. Accident soon gave some appearance of reality to the first suspicions of the sister of Outougamiz.

René was one day traversing a cypress-wood, when he heard screams in a sequestered spot: at these screams he ran towards it. Between the trees he perceived an Indian female struggling with an European. On the appearance of a witness the ravisher fled. The brother of Amelia had recognized Febriano and Mila. "Ah!" cried the maiden, throwing herself into his arms," hadst thou married me thou wouldst not have been obliged to come to my succour. How thankful I am to thee, nevertheless! I was so terrified when the dark man surprized me, that I squeezed my eyes as close as I could for fear of seeing him." René smiled; he cheered the young savage, and promised to escort her home to her father's. He first assisted her to

wash her bruised face. Mila then said: "What a soft hand thou hast! it feels just like my mother's. The wretches! they say so many bad things of thee, and thou art so kind!" When they were obliged to part, Mila complained that the way was so short, burst into tears, and hastened homeward, saying: "I am but a blue linnet, I cannot sing for the white hunter." Amelia's brother took the road to his hut, and thought no more of this adventure.

It was soon known to Ondouré, and furnished him occasion to add another calumny to those which he had invented to glut his hatred: he congratulated himself on having it in his power to cause Celuta to share those tortures of jealousy which he had felt on her account. The meeting of René and Mila was represented to the chaste sister of Outougamiz as an infidelity of the man whom she loved. Celuta wept and concealed her tears.

Meanwhile Celuta had expectations of be-

coming a mother: could the fruitful wife fail to ensure the rights of the lover? When René was certain that his wife was pregnant, he approached her with a holy respect, and clasped her gently in his arms: "Woman," said he, Heaven hath blest thy womb."

Celuta answered: "I have not dared to offer my prayers before thee for the infant that the Great Spirit hath given me. I am but thy servant: it is my duty to nurse thy son or thy daughter; I will endeavour to perform it faithfully."

A cloud overcast the brow of Amelia's brother. "To nurse my son or my daughter!" said he, with a melancholy smile: "shall he be happier than I? shall she be happier than my sister? Who would have said that I should give life to a human being?" He went forth, leaving Celuta overwhelmed with inexpressible grief.

Ondouré prosecuted his designs: in spite of the authority of Adario and Chactas, he



had re-established the Allouez, guards devoted to the despotism of the ancient Suns, in all their power; he had dispatched messengers with secret orders to all the Indian nations. He deceived the commandant of Fort Rosalie more than ever by means of false communications: he sent him word by Febriano that, but for the opposition of Adario, Chactas, and René, he should be completely master of the council of the Natchez; that those three enemies of the French name prevented him from keeping his promise. Ondouré solicited Chepar to carry them off when he should give a signal for it. In this policy he had the two-fold design of delivering up his adversaries to the strangers, and of exciting the Natchez to rise against these same strangers, when the latter should have committed violence upon two Sachems who were the idols of their country.

It was necessary, however, not to be too precipitate; it was requisite that all the forces

of the Indians should be secretly assembled, in order to strike the final blow with the greater certainty. It was at the same time as difficult to moderate these elements of discord as to make them act in concert. The truces incessantly renewed scarcely suspended hostilities, which were ever ready to re-commence: the French and the Natchez trained themselves to arms, while cultivating together those fields on which they were in the sequel to exterminate one another.

Several months were absolutely required for the execution of the vast plan of Ondouré. Chepar, on his part, had not received all the reinforcements which he expected. A peace forced upon both chiefs by circumstances prevailed therefore in the colony: the Indians passed their time, while awaiting what was to happen, in feasting and their usual occupations.

Mila, whose family was akin to that of Celuta, went to thank the man whom she



called her deliverer. She carried him a sheaf of maize, which resembled a distaff crowned with golden wool. "There," said she, "is all that I can give thee, for I am not rich." René accepted the present.

Celuta's eyes filled with tears, but she received her young kinswoman with her unalterable kindness: she even tenderly caressed the amiable girl, who asked if she should be present at the wild rice * harvest. Celuta told her that she should be there. Mila departed full of joy, on observing René still holding the sheaf of maize in his hand.

Captain Artaguette, after he conducted the unfortunate friends back to the Natchez, had gone to New Orleans to see his brother, General Diron Artaguette, and Harlay, a young counsellor, the intended husband of Adelaide, daughter of the governor of Louisiana. He returned to Fort Rosalie the day before that fixed for the harvest mentioned by Mila.

* A species of rice which grows in the rivers.

He had heard of the marriage of Amelia's brother with Celuta: the gratitude which the captain felt towards the fair savage, the tender regard which he had for her, and his esteem for René, led him to the hut of the new couple. He found the family assembled, and ready to set out for the harvest: Chactas, Adario, Celuta, René, and Outougamiz, who had completely recovered his strength, Outougamiz, who had forgotten what he had done, and who had fled when René related the prodigies of his deliverance.

Artaguette was received with the most affectionate hospitality by Celuta, who called him her brother. "Celuta saved thee," said Outougamiz, "thou hast saved my friend; I love thee, and if our nations again fight, my hatchet will turn away from thee." René invited the captain to attend the harvest-feast. "Most willingly," replied Artaguette; he could not remove his eyes from

Celuta, whose beauty was heightened by a secret languor.

The people embarked in canoes, on the river that ran at the foot of the hill on which the hut of René was built. They proceeded up the river to the place where the crop grew. The oak-willows bordering the river threw a shade over it; and the canoes forced a passage through the plants, which covered the surface of the water with their leaves and flowers. At intervals the eye penetrated to the bottom of the water, rolling over golden sands or soft beds of verdant moss. Kingfishers were perched on the overhanging boughs, or flew off before the canoes, skimming the surface of the stream.

They reached the appointed place: it was a bay where the river rice grew in abundance. This grain, which Providence has sown in America, to supply the wants of the Savages, takes root in the water; it is of the nature of

ordinary rice, and furnishes a pleasant and salutary food.

At the sight of the wonderful field, the Natchez shouted, and the rowers, redoubling their efforts, propelled their canoes amid the floating harvest. Myriads of birds rose from it, and after enjoying the bounty of Nature, yielded their places to men.

In a moment the vessels were hidden from view by the height and thickness of the crop. The voices issuing from the moving labyrinth heightened the magic of the scene. Birchen cords were distributed among the reapers; these cords they passed round the rice, tying it up in the form of a sheaf; then pulling this sheaf over the gunwale of the canoe, they struck it with a light flail, and the ripe grain fell to the bottom of the vessel. The noise of the flails beating the sheaves, the murmur of the water, the laughter and mirthful sallies of the savages, enlivened this scene, half marine and half rural.



The harvest was secured: the moon rose to light the little fleet on its return; her beams fell upon the river between the scarcely trembling willows. Young Indians of both sexes swam after the canoes, like Syrens or Tritons; the air was perfumed by the fragrance of the new harvest, mingled with the odours of the trees and flowers. The vessel of the great chief headed the flotilla, and a priest standing at its prow, repeated the song consecrated to the luminary of travellers:

"Hail, spouse of the sun! thou hast not always been happy! When, constrained by Athaënsic to quit the nuptial couch, thou issuedst from the portals of the morn, thy beauteous arms, outstretched toward the east, unavailingly call thy husband.

"They are the same fair arms which thou openest, when thou returnest to the west and the cruel Athaënsic forces the sun in his turn to flee before thee.

"Since thine unfortunate union, Melan-

choly hath become thy companion; she never leaves thee, whether thou pleasest to wander among clouds, or motionless in the heavens thou keepest thine eyes fixed on the forests, or reclining on the margin of the waters of the Meschacebé, thou indulgest in reverie, or strayest with phantoms along the pale heaths.

"But, O Moon, how beautiful art thou in thy sorrow! The starred Bear is eclipsed by thy charms; thy looks impart softness to the azure vault of heaven; they render the clouds translucent; they make the rivers glisten like snakes; they tip the trees with silver; they throw a white veil over the mountain-tops; they change the vapours of the valley into a sea of milk.

"'Tis thy light, O Moon, that inspires the Sachems with grand ideas; it is thy light which fills the heart of a lover with the remembrance of his mistress; by thy rays the mother watches beside the cradle of her child;

by thy rays warriors march against the foes of their country; by thy rays the hunters lay snares for the inhabitants of the forests; and now, by thy rays, laden with the gifts of the Great Spirit, we are returning to our happy huts."

Thus sang the priest: at each stanza the conch mingled its notes with the general chorus of the Natchez: a religious awe seized Celuta, René, Artaguette, Outougamiz, Adario, and the aged Chactas; a presentiment of coming calamity had taken possession of their hearts. Sorrow is at the bottom of human joys: Nature attaches pain to all our pleasures, and when she cannot deny us happiness, by a last artifice she mingles with it the fear of its loss. A voice roused the friends from their serious reflexions; it said: "My deliverer, here I am!" René, Artaguette, Outougamiz, Chactas, Adario, and Celuta turned their eyes to the river, and perceived Mila, swimming after the canoe.

Covered by a veil she displayed above water no more than her half-naked shoulders and her dripping head; a few ears of rice, fancifully enwreathed, adorned her brow. Her smiling face sparkled in the moonlight amid her ebon locks; silvery drops rolled down her cheeks; you would have taken the little Indian maiden for a Naiad who had stolen a crown from Ceres.

" Outougamiz," said she, " come and bathe with me:" as for thy brother, the white warrior, I should be afraid of him."

Outougamiz leaped over the gunwale of the canoe. Mila continued swimming abreast of him. Sometimes she slowly balanced herself with her face turned towards the heavens, when you would have imagined that she was sleeping on the bosom of the water; at others striking the elastic waves with her foot, she glided swiftly along in the river. Sometimes half-raised above the surface, she seemed to be standing upright; sometimes her arms



gracefully repelled the closing liquid: in this position she turned her head a little, and the extremities of her feet appeared above the water. Her swelling breasts looked beneath the liquid veil as if enclosed in a globe of crystal; she produced by her movements a multitude of circles, which, propelling each other, spread to a great distance. Mila sported among these brilliant undulations, like a swan washing her neck and wings.

The languor of Mila's attitudes might have induced a supposition that she was seeking hidden pleasures in those mysterious waters; but the calmness of her voice and the simplicity of her words bespoke only the most tranquil innocence. Equally innocent were the frolics of the elegant Indian with Outougamiz: she threw her wet arm about his neck; she put her face so close to his as to make him feel at once the coolness of her cheeks and the warmth of her lips. Linking her feet with those of her companion, she was sepa-

rated from him by the water only, the soft resistance of which heightened the delight of this enwreathement. "Was it not thus," said she, "that thou reclinedst with René on the bed of reeds in the morass?" These gambols were to be considered only as those of a charming child, and if something unknown mingled with the thoughts of Mila, it was not to Outougamiz that those thoughts were addressed.

All these graces had not escaped the notice of the daughter of Tabamica; the more insensible René appeared to them, the more she apprehended an affected delicacy. On her return to her habitation she found herself ill: though her maternal bosom had yet numbered but seven times the return of that orb which witnessed Mila's pleasure, Celuta felt that René's child was in haste to reach the sad light of heaven, in order to share the destinies of its father.

Amelia's brother had passed the night in

the forest: at sun-rise he could not find Celuta, either in the hut, or at the spring, or in the field of flowers. He soon learned that, overtaken in the night by the throes of travail, his wife had retired to the hut built for her, according to custom, by the matrons, and that she would there abide a greater or less number of days, according to the sex of the infant.

In giving life to a daughter Celuta had well nigh lost her own: the child was carried to her father, who with tears gave her the name of Amelia. This second Amelia seemed to be at the point of death: René deemed it his duty to pour the water of baptism on the head of the infant in its perilous situation: the child cried. Baptism was regarded by the Savages as a sort of spell: Ondouré accused the white warrior of a design to kill his child, out of dislike for Celuta and love for another woman. Thus was the destiny of René

accomplished: every thing, even happiness itself, became prejudicial to him.

The child lived, and the days of seclusion expired: Celuta returned to her dwelling, where her relatives awaited her. The garments of the young mother were new; she durst not wear any article which she had previously used; her infant was at her breast. When she reached the threshold of the hut, her eyes, till then, modestly cast down, were raised to René, who extended his arm to receive his child: all that the passion of a lover, all that the dignity of a wife, all that the affection of a mother, all that the submission of a slave, all that the grief of a woman can combine most touching, was expressed in the look of Celuta. "I have given you but a daughter," said she; "forgive the sterility of my womb; I am not happy."

René took his child, held it up towards heaven, and returned the babe to the arms of its mother. All the relatives blessed the

daughter of Celuta; Outougamiz hung the gold Manitou for a moment about her neck, and seemed thus to dedicate her to sorrow.

Among the Savages it is the maternal relatives who give names to new-born infants. According to the religion of these nations the infant receives its soul from the father, but the body only from the mother: it is therefore supposed that the family of the wife alone knows the name which the body ought to bear. René, however, persisted in calling his daughter Amelia, and thus offended more and more against the manners of the Indians.

Since he became a father his melancholy was exceedingly increased. He passed whole days in the recesses of the forests. When he returned home he would take his infant on his knees, look at her with a mixture of affection and despair, and suddenly replace her in her cradle, as if she excited his horror. Celuta turned aside her head and concealed

her tears, ascribing the action of René to a feeling of hatred for herself.

If René, coming home in the middle of the night, addressed words of kindness to Celuta, she could scarcely disguise the alteration of her voice; if René approached his wife in the day-time, she watched an opportunity to put her daughter into his arms and to withdraw; if René expressed any uneasiness on account of the declining health of the sister of Outougamiz, she attributed its derangement to the birth of Amelia. She then said such touching things while striving to assume a serene look, that her trouble appeared the more plainly through this calm of resigned virtue.

Mila seemed to haunt the steps of Amelia's brother. She frequently went to his hut, where Celuta always gave her a kind reception.

"If thou wert my mother," said Mila to the afflicted wife, "I should be always with thee; I should hear the white warrior talk to

thee of the friendship of thy brother, and relate to thee histories of his country. We would prepare together the couch of the white warrior, and when he was asleep I would cool his brow with a fan of feathers."

At the conclusion of her speeches Mila usually threw herself into the arms of Celuta: this was seeking quiet amid the storm, and coolness in the fires of noon. The young Indian obtained a look of pity from the eyes which she caused to overflow with tears; she solicited friendship of a heart which she had just stabbed.

Mila's mother, displeased at these rambles, threatened her daughter to throw water in her face, a punishment which Indian matrons inflict on their children. Mila replied, that she would set fire to her mother's hut; the parents laughed, and Mila continued to seek the company of René.

One evening the latter was seated on the bank of one of those lakes which are every

where found in the wilds of the New World. A few detached balsam-trees studded the shore; the pelican with neck bent back and bill resting like a scythe on his bosom, stood motionless on the point of a rock; the wild turkeys raised their hoarse voices from the tops of the magnolias; the bosom of the lake, smooth as a mirror, reflected the radiance of sunset.

Mila came up. "Here I am," said she: "and quite amazed, I assure thee. I was afraid of being scolded."

"And why should you be scolded?" asked René.

"I know not," answered Mila, sitting down and resting her arms on the knees of the white warrior.

"Have you not some secret?" rejoined René.

"Great Spirit!" exclaimed Mila; "I have a secret! If I were to consider ever so long, I should not recollect any."

Mila placed her two little hands on René's

knees, laid her head upon them, and thoughtfully fixed her eyes on the lake. This attitude was painful to René, but he had not the courage to disturb the girl. After some time he perceived that Mila was asleep.

Age of candour which knowest no danger! age of confidence how quickly dost thou pass! "Happy were it for thee, Mila," muttered René, "wert thou here sleeping thy last sleep!"

"What sayest thou?" cried Mila, rousing from her slumber; "Why hast thou wakened me? I was dreaming such a pleasant dream!"

"You would do better," said René, "to sing me a song, instead of sleeping thus like a child."

"'Tis very true," said Mila, "wait till I wake myself;" and she rubbed her eyes, moist with sleep and tears.

"I recollect," said she, "a song of Celuta's. Ah! how happy is Celuta! how

richly she deserves to be so! She is thy wife, is she not?"

Mila began to sing; her voice had great sweetness, mingled with innocence and simplicity. She could not sing long; she made continual mistakes, and wept for sheer vexation because she could not repeat Celuta's song.

Mila's mother, who came in search of her, found her sitting on René's knees; she struck her with a bunch of lilac which she held in her hand, and Mila ran off, throwing leaves at her mother. The imprudent anger of the mother revealed the situation in which she had found her daughter, and the story was every where circulated. Mila herself was eager to tell Celuta that she had slept on the lap of the white warrior on the bank of the lake. Celuta needed not this fresh proof, as she conceived it, of the misfortune which had befallen her.

Amelia's brother was too well acquainted

with the passions not to perceive that which was springing up in Mila's heart. He became more strict with her, and this severity deterred the gentle savage. Her repelled feelings turned to all that loved René, to Celuta and to Outougamiz, who had delivered the white warrior with such courage, and swam so well with her in the river. Mila frequently met Outougamiz in the huts of her acquaintance: the sportive girl was delighted with the heroic simplicity of the young man.

"Thou savedst thy friend from the flames," said she one day to Outougamiz. "That was excellent! how I should have liked to be there!"—"Thou wouldst have greatly embarrassed me," replied the brother of Celuta, "because thou wouldst have been hungry; and what should I have given thee to eat?"

"True!" replied the damsel; "but if I had been with thee, I would have taken the head of thy friend in both my hands, I would have warmed his brow with my lips, and put

my hand to his bosom to ascertain if his heart still throbbed;" and with these words Mila clapped her hand to the heart of Outougamiz.

"Do not so," said the savage. "Surely thou art not in love!"—"Certainly not," exclaimed the astonished maiden; "but I will ask Celuta."

The soul of youth, when it takes its flight, tries all sentiments, tastes like a child of all cups, whether sweet or bitter, and learns to know them by experience alone. Attracted at first by René, Mila soon found in him something too far from her. The heart of Outogamiz was the heart which suited Mila's; their sympathy once manifested, promised to be durable, and that sympathy was on the point of springing up.

Alas! those simple and gracious loves, which ought to have glided on beneath a serene sky, were formed at a period of storms. Unhappy ye who begin life at the breaking out of revolutions: ye lack love, friendship,

peace, those blessings which constitute the felicity of other men; ye will not have time to love or to be loved. In the age when all is illusion, the frightful truth will pursue you; at the age when all is hope, ye will cherish none; ye must break before-hand the bonds of life, for fear of multiplying ties which are destined so soon to be severed!

René, living within himself, and, as it were, out of the world by which he was surrounded, scarcely noticed what was passing about him; he took no means of counteracting the calumnies of which he was ignorant, or which he would have despised had he been acquainted with them: calumnies which, nevertheless, heaped upon his head public calamities and domestic sorrows. Confining himself within the circle of his own griefs and reveries, he became in this sort of moral solitude more wild and unsociable: impatient of every yoke, annoyed by every duty, he felt the attentions paid to him irksome; to love

was to displease him. He delighted only in strolling about at random; he never told what he did, or whither he was going, nay, he did not even know that himself. Was he actuated by passions or remorse? Was he concealing vices or virtues? None could answer these questions. It was possible to believe any thing about him but the truth.

Seated at the door of her hut, Celuta waited whole days for her husband. She accused him not; she accused herself only; she reproached herself for having neither beauty nor fondness enough. In the generosity of her love she even went so far as to believe that she could become the friend of any other female who possessed the heart of René, but, when she lifted her infant to her breast, she could not help bathing it with her tears. When Amelia's brother returned, Celuta prepared his repast; she used no other language than that of kindness; she feared only lest she should be troublesome to him; she

began a smile which expired on her lips; and when, casting stolen glances at René, she saw him pale and agitated, she would have given her whole life to restore to him a moment's repose.

Chactas strove sometimes to appease by his tranquil reason the troubles of the soul of Amelia's brother; but he could not wring his secret from him. "What ails thee?" said he, "Thou desiredst solitude: hath it ceased to suffice thee? Didst thou think that thy heart was inexhaustible? its springs still continue to flow."

"But," replied René, "what should prevent us from closing life when we perceive that happiness is fled? Why may not inseparable friends go together to that world where bliss never ends?"

"I attach no more value to life than thyself," replied the experienced Sachem; "we die and are forgotten; we live and our existence occupies no more space than our

memory. What are our joys or our griefs to nature? But wherefore engage thyself with that which is of such short duration? Thou hast already performed among us the duties of a man towards thy adopted country: there are others yet left thee to fulfil. Perhaps thou wilt not wait long for what thou desirest."

The words of old age are oracles: circumstances actually began to hasten the catastrophe at Natchez. The messengers of Ondouré had returned with favourable answers from the Indian nations. The French commandant, who had received reinforcements, needed not to be secretly excited, as he was by Febriano, to violent measures against René, Chactas, and Adario. Chepar urged Ondouré to the performance of his promises relative to the partition of the lands; Ondouré replied, that he would carry them into effect as soon as he should have got rid of his adversaries.

The calumnies circulated by Ondouré, with the assistance of the sorcerer, against the brother of Amelia, had produced their full effect: with the Natchez, the impious René was the secret accomplice of the hostile plans of the French; with the French, René, the traitor, was the enemy of his former country.

The family of Chactas, amidst which Mila now passed her time, was one morning taking the accustomed repast in the hut of Celuta, when Jaques, the grenadier, entered: he was the bearer of a note from Captain Artaguette, addressed to the adopted son of Chactas, or, in his absence to the venerable Sachem himself. This note apprized René of an order which had just been issued to apprehend him and Adario. "You have not a moment to lose," wrote the captain to the brother of Amelia, "if you would give your enemies the slip. You are denounced as having borne arms against France; a council of war is

already appointed to try you. Adario, who will be kept a prisoner till the lands are ceded, will be held responsible for the conduct of the Natchez. As for Chactas, they dare not yet meddle with him."

At this intelligence Celuta shuddered: for the first time she blessed the absence of René, whom she had not seen for two days. Celuta, Mila, and Outougamiz, agreed to search the forests for the brother of Amelia, and to keep him away from the huts: Chactas, with the rest of his family, hastened to the dwelling of Adario.

When apprized of the lot preparing for him, Adario refused to stir: spreading a mat upon the ground, he seated himself on it. Annoyed by the lamentations of those about him: "Unworthy family!" he exclaimed in a terrible voice, "what is it that ye advise me to do? What I—I hide myself from robbers! I set such an example to our youth!

Chactas, I expected different sentiments from one of the fathers of the country."

"Of what benefit to your country," rejoined Chactas, "can be your captivity or your death? If you withdraw, on the contrary, to-morrow perhaps we may be able to defend ourselves against the oppressors of our liberty; but to-day we have not the means: I know not what treacherous hand has removed most of our young warriors out of the way."

"No," said Adario, "I will not withdraw. To you I leave the duty of avenging me."

Adario rose and grasped his arms: his family durst not oppose his design. The Sachem resumed his seat: a deep silence reigned around him.

It was not long before the steps of a party of grantees, headed by Febriano, were heard without. On the left of the Sachem was his son, behind him his aged wife and his young daughter, the mother of an infant which she

held in her arms, before him Chactas leaning upon a white staff.

Febriano entered, opened a paper containing his orders, and commanded Adario to follow him.

"Yes, I will follow thee," answered the Sachem, "I see that thou knowest me again: On the day of the battle I frightened thee too much to forget me."

Adario sprang from his mat, and pointed a javelin to the breast of Febriano; Chactas, whose eyes could no longer direct his trembling hands, sought in vain, amid the darkness which surrounded him, to turn aside the blows, and to gain attention to words of peace. The renegade drew back, and his men advanced. Cries burst from the concourse of people collected about the place. The weeping women clung to the muskets of the intruders. A voice was raised, the armed band fired: the son of Adario fell dead by his side. The Sachem defended himself for

some time behind the body of his son; Chactas was thrown down and trampled upon. A thick smoke rose into the air; the hut was in flames; all fled. Bound by the hand of Febriano, Adario was conducted, with his wife, daughter, and grandson, to Fort Rosalie. Other emissaries of the accomplice of Ondouré, dispatched to René's habitation, found there nought but silence and solitude.

The people of the colony thronged in crowds to see the prisoners as they passed. The latter would have excited profound pity, were it not sufficient to be unfortunate among men, in order to be hated and persecuted by them. Artaguette, who had refused to lead soldiers to Natchez, had himself been put under arrest, and could not afford any relief to the captive family.

Chepar's council being assembled, Febriano declared that Adario had taken up arms in opposition to the king's orders, and that he had been obliged to secure him by

main force. Two measures were proposed: the first, to transport the rebel to the islands; the second, to sell him and his family at Fort Rosalie; the latter was adopted. The commandant preferred the more violent of the two alternatives, as being more likely to strike a salutary terror into the Natchez: narrow minds frequently consider imprudence and cruelty as skill and courage. It was resolved that Adario, his wife, and children, should that very instant be publicly sold, and employed in the labours of the colony.

Ondouré secretly passed some hours at Fort Rosalie: Febriano acquainted him with the decision of the council; the savage rejoiced at it as well as at the death of Adario's son and the destruction of the hut. He merely regretted that he had not been able to strike down his principal victim at the first blow; but he cheered himself with the thought, that if René had escaped his fate, it was only for a short time.

The Indian hoped to find the rage of the Natchez at its height, and their minds prepared for any attempt: he was not disappointed. On his return from Fort Rosalie, he repaired to the spot where Chactas had assembled the tribes after the capture of Adario: it was on the bank of the lake of the woods, the very spot where Mila had fallen asleep on René's knees.

The chief appeared with doleful look amidst the assembly. All eyes turned towards him. The young warriors, but just returned from a long hunting expedition, said, "Guardian of the Sun, what wouldst thou advise us to do?"

"My opinion," replied the wily Savage, with affected modesty, "is the opinion of the Sachems."

The Sachems commended this moderation, excepting Chactas, who discovered the hypocrite.

"Let the female chief speak her sentiments!" was now the general cry.

"O unfortunate Natchez!" said the subjugated and guilty Akansie, "there is a conspiracy!" Here she paused.

"We must force her to speak out!" cried the multitude.

Ondouré then began! "Take notice, O warriors, that the son of Chactas, who was represented as being one of the victims marked out by Chepar, has nevertheless escaped the treachery of our enemies, while Adario is in chains. Sachems and warriors, have ye any confidence in me?"

"Yes! yes!" was repeated by a thousand voices: at this moment of passion the voice of Chactas was not heard.

"Will you," resumed Ondouré, "do what I shall direct for your welfare?"

"Speak, we will obey thee," again cried the assembly.

"Well!" said Ondouré, "return to your

huts; manifest no resentment; put on a submissive look; bear further wrongs, and I promise you . . . . . but it is not time to speak out. I will communicate to the high-priest what Athaënsic has disclosed to me. Yes, Natchez, Athaënsic appeared to me in the valley; his eyes were flames of fire; his hair streamed in the air, like rays of the sun through stormy clouds; his body was immense and indescribable: it was impossible to behold it without feeling the terrors of death. 'Deliver the country,' said he to me; 'concert measures with the minister of my altars . . . . .' The Spirit then revealed to me what I was first to tell the great sorcerer only: these are awful mysteries."

The assembly shuddered. "'Twere impious," exclaimed the high-priest, "to doubt that Athaënsic has transferred his power to Ondouré. Warriors, the guardian of the Sun commands you, through me, to separate. Go

to your huts, and leave to Heaven the care of avenging you!"

At these words the Savages dispersed, full of a religious awe, which was augmented by the darkness and the silence of the forests.

Ondouré was not desirous of arming the Natchez against the French just at this moment: they were not strong enough to ensure a triumph, and the only result would have been an action as indecisive as the former. Besides, it was not a fair and open combat that the savage meditated: he hoped to strike a secret but a surer blow. For this he was not yet prepared, and the day when his projects might be carried into effect with a probability of success was still far distant.

The scorned lover of Celuta had made the absence of his rival a new ground of calumny: not content with ruining René in the opinion of the Natchez, he caused search to be made for him in all quarters, with a view to deliver him up to the French. From a very different

motive Celuta had anxiously sought traces of her husband; but in vain had she questioned the rocks and the wilds. She went forth from her hut, and she returned thither apprehensive lest René should have meanwhile come back to it by some other way: sometimes she thought of repairing to Fort Rosalie, under the supposition that the object of her affection had already been conveyed thither; at others she sat down at a place in the forest where several roads met, and watched the different paths which issued from beneath its shades: she durst not call René, lest she might betray him by the sound of her voice. Amelia was never out of her mother's arms, and Celuta recovered strength, while weeping over that dear witness of her sorrows.

Outougamiz, always inspired when occupied with his friend's dangers, had been more fortunate than his sister: he had long before observed that Amelia's brother was fond of frequenting a hill on the banks of the Mescha-

cebé, in the side of which was a sepulchral cavern: it was there that he commenced his search. A different instinct led Mila to the same spot: the dove carried to a distance finds her way back to her mate through the ethereal expanse.

The two faithful messengers met at the entrance of the cavern. "What brings thee hither?" said Mila to Outagamiz. "My good genius," replied the savage, pointing to his gold chain. "And thou, Mila, what brought thee hither?" "I know not," rejoined the girl; "something that is perhaps the wife of thy genius. Thou wilt see that we are right, and that the white warrior is here."

They actually perceived René seated facing the river, beneath the entrance of the cavern: beside him lay a book, some fruit, maize, and weapons. This cavern was a fearful spot to the Natchez, who had there deposited part of the bones of their ancestors. They related

that a Spirit of the grave kept watch day and night at this sepulchre.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mila, "I should be sadly frightened if the white warrior were not here!"

Surprised at the appearance of his brother and the Indian girl, René supposed that they had appointed to meet at this sanctuary, as a fit place for witnessing an oath; and, as he ardently desired their union, he was delighted to see them.

Outougamiz and Mila said nothing to Amelia's brother concerning the real motive of their visit to the cavern: so shrewd do simple hearts become in any thing that concerns an object of their love! They were aware that if they revealed to René the dangers by which he was threatened, instead of detaining him they should only drive him away by their kindness. The ingenuous couple therefore let the white man believe what he pleased,

and merely strove to keep him in this retreat by the charm of friendly converse.

The brother of Celuta was yet ignorant of what had occurred at Natchez: he concluded that Adario had withdrawn with Chactas, till the moment when the children of the Sun should be able to revenge their wrongs. Outougamiz would fain have hastened to quiet the anxiety of his sister, but he could not think of quitting René; he hoped that Mila might find some pretext for leaving the cavern and going to cheer the hapless woman.

"My sublime brother," said René to the young savage, with a smile which rarely smoothed his brow, "art thou come once more to deliver me? Wherefore these arms? I have no danger to fear: I am with the dead only, and thou knowest that they are my friends. And thou, little Mila, what seekest thou? Life, no doubt? It is not here, and thou couldst not restore it to this heap of dust,

which even would not perhaps consent to take it back."

The religious Outougamiz kept silence. Mila trembled, and in her fright pressed close to Outougamiz. A faint gleam, darting into the cavern, served but to heighten its horrors; the whitened bones reflected a fantastic light; you would have imagined that the inanimate and mouldering relics were recovering life and motion. The river rolled its waters to the entrance of the cavern, and withered grass, hanging from the vault, waved in the breeze.

Mila, attempting to advance towards René, shook a pile of bones, which rolled upon her. "I shall die!" cried Mila, "I shall die! it is something so extraordinary!"

"My young friend," said the brother of Amelia, "be of good cheer."—"I swear," replied the girl, "that this has spoken."

"Spoken!" exclaimed Outougamiz.

René smiled, made Mila sit down beside

him, and taking her hand, "Yes," said he, "that has spoken: the grave tells us that in its bosom terminate all our joys and all our sorrows; that after we have been tossed about for a moment on earth, we pass into eternal rest. Mila is charming; her heart throbs with all sorts of love: my admirable brother is all soul,—a few more sighs upon earth (and God grant that they may be sighs of happiness) and the heart of Mila shall be for ever cold, and the ashes of that man whom friendship impelled to perform prodigies, shall be mingled with the dust of him who has never loved."

René paused, leant his head upon his hand, and watched the current of the river.

"Go on," said Mila, "what thou sayest is so sad, and yet methinks so pleasant."

René, turning his eyes from the river to the interior of the cavern, and fixing them upon a skeleton, said abruptly; "Mila, canst thou tell me his name?"

“His name!” repeated the affrighted girl; “I know it not; the dead are all alike.”

“Thou makest me see what I should never have seen of myself,” said Outougamiz. “Are the dead, then, so very insignificant?”

“The nature of man is oblivion and insignificance,” replied the brother of Amelia: “he lives and dies unknown. Tell me, Outougamiz, canst thou hear the grass growing in this scull which I hold to thine ear? Certainly not. Well, the thoughts which once grew within it made no more noise in the ear of God. Existence flows at the entrance of the cave of death like the Meschacebé at the entrance of this cavern: the borders of the narrow aperture prevent us from looking far either up or down the stream of life; we merely see a small portion of the human beings, journeying from the cradle to the grave, pass in rapid succession before us, without being able to discover whither they are going or whence they come.”

"I fully comprehend thine idea," exclaimed Mila. "If I were to say to my neighbour, placed in another cavern above this in which we are, 'Neighbour, didst thou see that wave which looked so bright' (I will suppose it to be a young maiden) 'pass by?' he would answer, perhaps, 'I saw a troubled wave pass by, for a storm overtook it between thy cavern and mine.'"

"Admirably explained, Mila!" said René. "Yes, so we appear in our passage through life; our brightness, our happiness, are not of long duration, and the wave of life grows dull before it is out of sight."

"What courage thou givest me!" exclaimed Mila. "I was so fearful when I entered this cavern! Now I could touch what I durst not before look at. She took into her hand the scull, which René had not replaced with the others, and saw ants creeping out of it.

"Life in death," said René: "it is on:

this side that the grave opens to us an immense prospect. In that brain which once contained an intellectual world, now dwells a world which has also its motion and intelligence. These ants will perish in their turn; and what will spring up out of their grain of dust?"

René ceased speaking. Encouraged by the first essay of her understanding, Mila said to Outougamiz; "I was thinking that if I were to be thy wife, and thou wert to die like those who lie here, I should be so sad that I should die too."

"I assure thee that I will not die," briskly replied Outougamiz. "If thou wilt be my wife, I promise thee to live."

"Kind promise!" ejaculated Mila, "with thy friendship for the white warrior, thou wouldst certainly keep thy word to me."

Mila, who had forgotten to throw down the relic which she had taken from the hand of René, held the pale cold scull against her

warm bosom; the beautiful hair of the maiden shaded as it fell the bald brow of death. With her ruddy cheeks, her coral lips, and the graces of youth, Mila resembled the roses of the eglantine, growing in country church-yards, and drooping their heads over the grave.

The great emotions produced by the sight of the sepulchral cavern, and the ardent friendship of the brother of Celuta, could alone have diverted the thoughts of Outougamiz for a moment from the dangers impending over his kindred and his country. The Indian made a sign to Mila, who understood its meaning and exclaimed: "How long I have been here already! What a scolding I shall have!" With these words she ran off, not to go to her mother's, but to inform Celuta that the white warrior was safe. The brother of Celuta remained with Amelia's brother; pretending to be rather unwell, he declared that he would pass the night in the cavern. He

knew that by this expedient he should detain his friend there.

While they were shut up in this receptacle of the dead, scenes of horror were passing at Fort Rosalie.

Had Chactas been a prisoner instead of Adario, he would have consoled his friends by soothing discourse; but Adario, silent and stern, understood not the art of gracefully expressing the feelings of his soul. He thought little of his family, still less of himself; all his thoughts, all his sorrows, were reserved for his country.

In order to be sold by auction, pursuant to the sentence of the council, he was led to the public market-place, where a concourse of people was assembled. His wife and his daughter, carrying her young child in her arms, followed, weeping. The Sachem turned sharply to them, and pointed toward the huts of their country; the two women suppressed their sobs. A large circle was

formed round the Indian family. The principal dealers in negro and Indian slaves came forward. The captives were stripped. The wife and daughter of Adario, hiding their nakedness with their hands, pressed, trembling and ashamed, close to the old man, whose body was quite covered with old scars and recent bruises.

The dealers, removing the chaste arms of the females, exposed them to looks more hateful than those of avarice. White women, adepts in the abominable traffic, gave their opinion respecting the value of the articles on sale.

"This old fellow," said a colonist, striking the Sachem with his cane, "is not worth one piece of gold. His right hand is mutilated; he is covered with wounds; he is more than sixty; he will be past work in three years."

"Besides," added another colonist, finding fault with the lot, with a view to obtain it at a lower price, "these savages are brutes

not worth a quarter as much as a negro; they would rather suffer death than work for a master. If you save one of them out of ten, you may think yourself lucky."

Amid this sort of discussion, they felt the shoulders, sides, and arms of Adario. "Aye handle me, scoundrel," said the Indian, "I am of a different species from thee."

"I never saw so insolent an old man," cried one of the dealers in human flesh, and he broke his ash switch on the head of the Sachem.

They next made their remarks on the females. The mother was old, broken down with grief, and past child-bearing. The daughter was worth somewhat more, but she was delicate, and the first six months' labour would knock her up. The child which was taken from the mother, was stripped stark naked, and examined in its turn: he was strong-limbed, and likely to grow large. "Yes," said a trader, "but it is a capital

advanced without any certainty of a return: consider how long such a child must be kept and fed."

With eyes expressive of the tenderest anxiety, the mother followed the movements which her child was forced to make; she feared that she should be parted from him for ever. At one time, being too roughly handled, he cried out: the mother darted forward to snatch up the fruit of her bowels, but was driven back with a whip; she fell bleeding with her face to the ground, which made the whole assembly burst with laughter. Her son, whose limbs were half dislocated, was nevertheless thrown to her. She took him, dried his tears with her hair, and hid him in her bosom. The bargain was concluded, and their garments were restored to the unfortunate family.

Adario expected to be burned: when he knew that he was a slave, his fortitude had nearly forsaken him: he looked around for a

poniard, but all the means of releasing himself had been removed. A sigh, or rather a hollow roar, burst from the bosom of the Sachem when he was conducted to the huts of the negroes, there to remain till he should be set to work. There Adario with his family saw those Africans dancing and singing about him, to celebrate the arrival of an American, enslaved with them by Europeans on the soil which gave him birth. In this troop was Imley, the negro, who had been accused of attempting to excite his fellow-slaves to insurrection: as there was not sufficient evidence to convict him of this crime, or this virtue, he had come off with fifty lashes. He secretly pressed the hand of Adario.

The same night that degraded Adario to the level of slaves, brought fresh sorrows to Outougamiz: finding that he could no longer keep Amelia's brother in the dark, or detain him under a vain pretext in the sepulchral cave, he determined to break silence.

"Thou hast caused me," said he to René, "to tell the first lie in my life. I am not ill, neither had Mila agreed to meet me here. Her good Spirit, who, however, is not like mine, discovered to her thy retreat, and we came hither to oblige thee to secrete thyself."

"I secrete myself!" exclaimed René; "thou knowest that such is not my custom."

"For that very reason," replied Outougamiz, "I told thee a falsehood. I knew that I should displease thee, if I begged thee to stay in the cavern; and yet Chactas desired that thou wouldst remain here."

Outougamiz then related in his way what had occurred at Natchez, adding that Adario must certainly have consented to withdraw, in order to prepare the better to fight.

"I cannot think so," said René, rising, and snatching up his arms; "but let us go and protect Celuta, who knows not where I am, and must be in great anxiety."

"And wherefore then did Mila leave us?"

rejoined Outougamiz. "She has more shrewdness than either of us, and she flies like a bird."

René was about to quit the cavern; Outougamiz threw himself in his way. "It is not long since sun-set," said the young Savage! wait a few moments longer. Thou knowest it is at night that I deliver thee."

This expostulation stopped the brother of Amelia, who clasped Outougamiz in his arms.

They presently heard in the water the noise of a canoe. This canoe almost immediately reached the bank close to the cavern; it brought Jacques, the grenadier, and Artaguette himself. The captain leaped upon the rock and said to René: "You are discovered; Ondouré has tracked you, and has just acquainted the commandant with the place of your retreat. Informed by accident of this circumstance, I broke my arrest during the night, and threw myself into this ca-

noe with Jacques; thanks be to Heaven we are here first! But lose no time; there are provisions in the canoe; cross the river; you will be safe on the other bank. Nay, hesitate not! Adario refused to retire; he was taken with his family; his son was killed by his side, and the Sachem himself conducted to the fort and sold for a slave. We will endeavour to repair the evil, which you would but aggravate by throwing yourself into the hands of your enemies."

René's bosom heaved with astonishment and indignation. "Captain," said he, "I cannot suppose you to be serious in your exhortations to flee while they are murdering my friends. Adario a slave! his son killed! and what has become of my wife and child? Let us hasten to defend them; let us rouse the nation; let us deliver the generous land which has given me hospitality."

"We will take care of your wife and child, of Chactas, and all your friends," said Arta-

guette, interrupting René; "but you will be their ruin this moment, if you persist in making your appearance. Once more, depart, and spare me the misery of seeing you seized and dragged away. Consider too that you are exposing this brave grenadier."

"What a life is mine!" exclaimed René, in a tone of despair. Then suddenly resuming: "Well, generous Artaguette," said he, "I will not expose you; I will not expose this brave grenadier; I will not compromise, as you say, my wife and daughter, Chactas, and my friends; but strive not to divert me from the resolution which I have taken. I am not a criminal, obliged to hide myself in caverns by day, and in forests at night. I accept your canoe; I will depart, but it shall be for New Orleans; I will go to the governor, enquire what is my crime, and offer my life for that of Adario: I will procure pardon for him, or perish."

The captain, though admiring the resolu-

tion of René, endeavoured to dissuade him from carrying it into effect. "Your enemies," said he, "are base men: they will not be able to appreciate either your merit or the worth of your action. A stranger, and without protectors, you will not succeed; you will not even be able to obtain a hearing. Nay, I cannot help adding that, from the calumnies circulated against you, and the power of your calumniators, the rigour of military authority in a new colony is very likely to prove fatal to you."

"So much the better!" emphatically replied the brother of Amelia; "the burden is heavy and I am weary. I recommend to you Celuta, her daughter, my second Amelia . . . Chactas, my second father . . . . ." Then turning to Outougamiz, who had not understood any part of their conversation, which was in their native language, he said to him in Natchez:

"My friend, I am going a journey. When

shall we meet again? who knows? perhaps in a place where we shall enjoy more happiness: there is nothing on earth that is worthy of thy virtue."

"Thou mayst go if thou wilt," answered Outougamiz, "but thou well knowest that I can follow and find thee again. I will seek Mila, who has more understanding than I; from her I shall learn what thou wilt not tell me."

The rattling of arms was heard. "I shall no longer endeavour to detain you," said the captain. "I will write in your behalf to my brother, the general, and to my friend, Counsellor Harlay." Artaguette ordered the grenadier to get out of the canoe, and made René step into it; the latter, pushing off from the bank with an oar, was carried along by the current.

Febriano arrived, but found only Captain Artaguette and the grenadier: he had no doubt that René owed his escape to their at-

tachment. There are men whom you may safely charge with having done good, as there are others whom you may always suspect of having done mischief. Artaguette cast a look of scorn at Febriano, who answered it only by a threatening gesture addressed to Jacques. Outongamiz, when he saw the brother of Amelia departing, said to himself: "I might swim after him; but I must consult Mila," and accordingly he went to consult her.

It is easy to imagine what a relief it was to Celuta when she saw her young friend hastening towards her with a smiling face, which proclaimed at a distance that the white warrior was safe. "Celuta!" exclaimed Mila, breathless with running, "thou mightst have sat here weeping for three successive moons without finding him. I went straightway, without any one telling me, to the cavern where my deliverer was: Outougamiz arrived there at the same time that I did. Great Spirit! how frightened I should have been,

had I not been so overjoyed! Only think—thy brother is taking care of thy husband in the cavern, where they are talking like two eagles."

Celuta was instantly aware that René was in the sepulchral cavern with Outougamiz. She embraced the little Indian, saying, "Charming girl, thou givest me now as much pleasure as thou hast given me pain."

"I give thee pain!" exclaimed Mila. "How so? Wouldst thou not have me be the wife of thy brother, Outougamiz the Simple? And yet we have mutually promised in the great cavern to marry." Mila ran off again, saying, "I will come back, I will come back! but I must go and shew myself to my mother."

Celuta filled a basket with cakes and fruit, fastened her child to her back, and, supported by a reed, repaired to the Cavern of Ancestors. It was past midnight when she arrived there: she could not suppress an inward

terror on approaching the awful place. She paused to listen: no sound met her ear: in a low tone she called Outougamiz, not daring to pronounce the name of René; but no voice answered hers.

"They are asleep, perhaps," said she to herself, and entered the cavern: she walked upon rolling bones, repeating at every step the question, "Art thou there?" Her accents expired in the silence of death. The Indian felt ready to swoon: her eyes searched through the darkness of this tomb; no living creature breathed within it.

Celuta hurried out in dismay: she climbed the steep bank, cast her eyes over the river and the shores, scarcely visible by the starlight: she called René and Outougamiz, she ceased, again called and again paused to listen, fatigued herself with uselessly running this way and that, and it was not till she perceived the first tints of day, that she could make up her mind to return to her hut.



The daughter of Tabamica was passing through the great village, which had been forsaken by most of the Indians since the captivity of Adario: she heard steps behind her, turned her head, and perceived her brother. "Where is thy friend?" cried she. "Gone," replied Outougamiz; "perhaps he will not return; but what of that, since I am going to rejoin him? I know not indeed whither he is gone, but Mila will tell me." Mila, who had given her mother the slip, came up at that moment. She saw Celuta in tears and Outougamiz, with that inspired look which he had when friendship caused his heart to throb. She was informed of their new alarms. "You puzzle yourselves sadly about nothing," said she: "let us go to Fort Rosalie: the other good warrior will tell us where to find my deliverer." She opened the basket which Celuta was carrying, divided the fruit and cakes, took her share, and began to de-

scend the hill towards the colony, desiring the brother and sister to follow her.

The sun was then lighting a scene of horror. Adario had been received by the Blacks, his companions in servitude, with singing and dancing: the night was spent in this merriment of chains. At day-break the superintendent of the slaves drove the Sachem to the field along with a party of negroes and a number of oxen. Soldiers were encamped on the lands which the labourers were bringing into cultivation.

The captivity of Adario and his family was an example with which the commandant hoped to strike terror into the rebels, as he termed them. Information was received that the night had passed quietly at Natchez, but it was not known that this tranquillity was the effect of the very plots of Ondouré. Chepar conceived the Indians to be disheartened, and with a view to break completely their spirit of independence, he determined to ex-



hibit to them the most renowned of their chiefs, after Chactas, reduced to the condition of a slave. Orders were therefore issued to permit the approach of the Savages, but without arms, if any of them should come to the field where the slaves were at work.

The driver, with a whip in his hand, made a sign to Adario, and ordered him to weed a plantation of maize: the Sachem deigned not so much as a look at the task-master. The wife of the Sachem and his daughter, with her child at her back, were already bending over their work. "What are you doing?" cried Adario, in a voice of thunder. They raised themselves, but the whip compelled them to stoop afresh. Adario received the lashes which were inflicted on him, and which cut away pieces of flesh, as if his body had been the trunk of an oak.

At this moment a venerable blind man, led by a boy, was seen approaching; it was Chactas. In spite of the decision of the council

and the opposition of Ondouré, Chactas repaired alone with the calumet of peace to the gate of Fort Rosalie. Chepar had refused to see the Sachem, who had then desired to be conducted to the field of labour.

Chactas was so highly respected even by the Europeans, that the slave-driver thought it right to permit him to approach his friend. The two veterans remained for some time locked in each other's arms. "Adario," said Chactas, "I too have worn fetters."

"Thou didst not see the trees of thy country," replied Adario.

"Thou wilt soon regain thy liberty," said Chactas: "thou shalt be delivered, or we will all perish."

"'Tis of little consequence," answered Adario: "my hands are henceforth dishonoured. After all, I have but a day to live; but yon child, the offspring of that son whom the robbers yesterday slew by my side—yon child!—a slave for life!"

"Old man, 'tis enough," cried the driver; "now separate."

"Wait at least," replied Adario, "till Chactas has kissed my last child. Daughter, bring hither my grandson, that I may put him into the arms of my old friend, and that this friend, who is a free man, may bestow on him a blessing which pertains no more to these fettered hands."

The daughter of Adario trembled as she delivered the boy to his grandfather. Adario took him, kissed him affectionately, lifted him towards heaven, again raised him to his paternal lips, and inclined his head over the face of the infant, who smiled. The Sachem pressed the babe to his bosom, stepped aside as if to drop a tear on the last born of his race, and continued motionless for a few moments.

Adario turned round: he held the strangled infant by one leg, and hurled it among the

French. "The first died free," he shouted; "I have delivered the second: there he is!"

Confused clamours arose. "What atrocity!" cried some: "What virtue!" exclaimed others. The Savages who witnessed this scene, though they had laid aside their arms according to orders, rushed upon the soldiers; a fierce fray ensued; the Indians were repulsed. Adario was thrown into the dungeon of the fort; his daughter alone was with him, his daughter, who no longer suckled the infant snatched from her breast by a father's hand. The aged wife of Adario, struck by an unknown hand amid the commotion, rejoined in death her son and her grandchild.

Every thing was now rendered possible to the ambition and crimes of Ondouré: the indignation of the Natchez knew no bounds; it was easy to persuade them to enter into all the designs by which he promised to avenge them. The only point now was to allay a

tempest too violently excited, and the spoils of which Ondouré was not yet ready to gather up. He had still to wreak his vengeance on René, who had escaped his first stratagems; he had still to devise means, amid the massacre of the French, to immolate the brother of Amelia, to secure the person of Celuta, and to climb to the supreme authority by re-establishing the ancient power of the Suns: such were the dark designs which the Indian chief pondered in his soul.

The brother of Amelia had scarcely lost sight of the country of the Natchez, when, making shift to steer his canoe by means of an oar placed at the stern, he gave himself up to the impulse of the current. The beauty of the banks, and the first burst of spring in the forests, afforded no relief to his sadness.

He wrote in pencil the following lines in his tablets:

"Here I am alone! O Nature who surroundest me, my heart once adored thee;

can. I have lost the relish for thy charms! Sorrow hath touched me; I am blighted by its hand.

"What have I gained by coming to this land? Fool that thou art, oughtst thou not to perceive that thy heart would be thy torment, in what region soever thou mightst dwell!

"Reveries of my youth, wherefore crowd ye again upon my memory! Thou alone, O my Amelia, hast pursued the course which duty bade thee adopt. At least, if thou weepest, 'tis in the sheltered haven; while I am groaning upon the waves amid the tempest."

On approaching New Orleans, René observed a cross erected by missionaries, on high hills, at a spot where the body of a murdered man had been found. He steered for the bank, moored his canoe to a poplar, and made a pilgrimage to the cross; his prayer was not to be heard, for he went to beg, not

forgiveness of his sins, but the remission of those afflictions which God imposes upon all men. On reaching the foot of the cross he fell prostrate before it.

"O thou who hast been pleased to leave upon earth the instrument of thy sufferings, as a monument of thy charity and of the iniquity of the wicked—O divine pilgrim here below, grant the strength requisite to pursue my route! I have yet to traverse lands scorched by the sun; I hunger for thy manna, O Lord! for men have sold me only bitter bread. Call me speedily away to the heavenly country; I have not thy resignation to drink the dregs of the cup; my bones are weary; my feet are sore with walking: no host has consented to receive the stranger; the doors have been shut against me."

René deposited an oak bough as a votive offering at the foot of the cross. He descended the hills, returned to his canoe, and soon descried the capital of Louisiana.

He passed among the ships riding at anchor or moored along the quays. As he threaded the labyrinth of cables, he was hailed from on board a frigate, to which was committed the police of the port. A man with a speaking-trumpet cried out in French: "Of what Indian nation are you?" He replied: "Natchez." The brother of Amelia was ordered to come on board the frigate.

The captain, surprised to meet with a Frenchman in an Indian garb, asked for his passport: René had none. Being questioned respecting the object of his visit, he declared that he could not communicate it to any person but the governor. His canoe was searched, and in it were found the tablets, with the writing in pencil, which seemed unintelligible and suspicious. René was detained on board the frigate, and an officer sent ashore, to inform the governor that the captain had apprehended a Frenchman in the disguise of a savage: that the answers of this man were

embarrassed, and his manners extraordinary. The captain added in his letter, that the stranger refused to tell his name, and wished to speak with the governor: the officer took with him the tablets which had been found in the canoe.

The alarm was great at New Orleans; since the battle fought by the Natchez, in which those savages had displayed such skill and valour, considerable uneasiness had prevailed. The commandant of Fort Rosalie was incessantly dispatching couriers with formidable reports of the disaffection of the Indians. The different chiefs were named in these dispatches: they were those whom Febriano, at the instigation of Ondouré, took care to denounce to the credulous Chepar. Adario, Chactas himself, and René in particular, were represented as the authors of a permanent conspiracy, as men who, desiring the rupture of the treaties, and the continuation of the war, opposed the settlement of the

grantees. The last messenger brought accounts of the capture of Adario, and excited fears of an insurrection of the Savages.

If Ondouré overwhelmed René with his calumnies, Febriano imputed to him his own crimes. The people related that the brother of Amelia had trampled upon a crucifix; that he had sold his soul to Satan; that he passed his time in the forests with an Indian woman addicted to magic; that, after having been slain in a battle with the Illinois, he had been restored to life by a savage, a necromancer like himself. Elevation of genius, devotedness of love, prodigies of friendship and virtue, ye will ever be incomprehensible to mankind!

The governor, on perusing the captain's letter, had no doubt that the stranger was the unknown individual naturalized among the Natchez, and ordered that he should be brought before him. A report immediately spread over the city, that the famous French

chief of the Natchez had been made prisoner: the streets were choked by a superstitious crowd, and the windows filled with spectators. Amid this tumult, René, escorted by a detachment of marines, reached the landing-place: shouts of *Vive le Roi!* rent the air, as if some important victory had been won. Great, however, was the astonishment when, instead of the person expected, the people beheld only a handsome young man, whose demeanour was dignified without haughtiness, and whose face expressed neither insolence nor remorse.

The governor received René in a gallery, where the officers, magistrates, and principal inhabitants of the town, were assembled. Adelaide, the daughter of the governor, had also been anxious to see the man, whom she knew from the accounts of Captain Artaguette, and whose tablets she had just read with mingled interest and surprise. When René appeared, profound silence ensued.

He advanced towards the governor, and said: "I came hither expressly to see you. Fortune has befriended me for the first time in my life: she has gained me access to you much sooner than I expected."

The countenance, the looks, the voice of the stranger, surprised the assembly: it was impossible to discover in him the low-born, uneducated vagabond that rumour had described him to be. The governor, of a cold and reserved character, was himself struck by the noble air of the brother of Amelia: René had about him something commanding which forcibly captivated the soul. Adelaide appeared quite agitated; but her father, so far from being more favourably disposed towards the stranger, thenceforward considered him as infinitely more dangerous than the vulgar fellow mentioned in the dispatches from Fort Rosalie.

"As you have come hither to see me," said

the governor, "you have no doubt something to say to me. What is your name?"

"René," answered the brother of Amelia.

"So every body supposed," was the reply of the governor. "You are a Frenchman, naturalized among the Natchez? Well, what would you have with me?"

"Since you know who I am," answered René, "you have no doubt guessed the errand on which I am come. Adopted by Chactas, the wise and illustrious elder of the nation of the Natchez, I have witnessed all the wrongs which have been done these people. A vile rabble, composed of men, the offscouring of European corruption, has deprived an independent nation of its lands. This nation has been annoyed in its festivals, offended in its manners, crossed in its habits. So many injuries at length roused it; but before it appealed to arms, it demanded and hoped for justice from you: disappointed in its expectations, bloody battles succeeded,

When it was found that the Natchez were not to be subdued by open force, recourse was had to truces, which were not very scrupulously observed by the chief of the colony. A few days since, the commandant of Fort Rosalie proceeded to the highest outrages: I was marked out, together with Adario, brother to my wife's father, as one of the first victims. The Sachem has been seized and publicly sold: what calamities may have followed this unparalleled violence I know not. I have come hither to deliver myself to you, and to offer myself in exchange for Adario.

"I will not enter into justifications which I disdain, not knowing, moreover, of what I am accused: the suspicion of men is of itself a presumption of innocence. I shall merely assure you that, if there be a conspirator among the Natchez, I am he, for I have always opposed your oppressions. As a Frenchman, I may appear guilty; as a man I am innocent. Inflict then your severity

upon me, but let me ask you, can you punish Adario for having defended his country? Return to more equitable sentiments; break the fetters of a generous savage, whose only crime consists in having loved his country. If you deprive me of liberty, and restore it to the Sachem, you will at once satisfy justice and prudence. Let me not be told that you can detain us both: by releasing Adario, you will render the Indians, who revere him, favourably disposed towards you, while, on the contrary, they would never forgive his enslavement; by wreaking your vengeance on me, you will not arm a single hand against you; no one, not even myself, will remonstrate against the ball that shall pierce my breast."

It is impossible to describe the effect which this speech produced upon the assembly. Adelaide shed tears; leaning on the back of her father's arm-chair, she listened intently to the words of Amelia's brother; and the

countenance of this young female was seen reflecting all the emotions of fear or hope which the prisoner excited in her soul.

"Have you borne arms against the French?" asked the governor.

"I was not in the battle with the Natchez," answered René; "I was then with the warriors who had marched against the Illinois; but had I then been at the great village, I should not have hesitated to fight for my new country." The governor rose and said: "This is a point which a council of war must decide." He ordered the stranger to be lodged in the military prison.

René was conducted to the prison, and brought next day before the court. An advocate had been assigned him, but he refused to see or hold any intercourse with him. This advocate, Pierre de Harlay, a friend of Captain Artaguette's, was on the eve of marriage with Adelaide; he shared with the governor's daughter the interest which she felt for René:

the very refusal of the latter to admit him to an interview served only to increase his zeal in the cause of one who was so unlike the rest of mankind.

The council-hall was filled by the most distinguished persons of the colony. The officers appointed to try René put the usual questions; some letters from the commandant of Fort Rosalie were produced against him. He was asked the meaning of the writing in his tablets, and whether the name of Amelia were not a feigned name, and a disguise for some secret. The unfortunate young man turned pale. A cruel joy insinuated itself into his heart: to feel conscious of his innocence, and to be condemned by the law, would be, according to René's ideas, a sort of triumph over social order. To the charges of treason he replied only by a smile of scorn; he spoke in the warmest terms of Celuta, whose name was mentioned. He repeated that he had come for the sole purpose of soli-

citing the release of Adario, and for the rest they might do with him whatever it pleased God.

Harlay rose. "My client," said he, "would not enter into explanations with me any more than with his judges; he has refused to defend himself: but is it not easy to discover in his short answers some words which throw light on an infamous conspiracy? With what warmth he has spoken of the Indian woman whose lot is united with his! And who is this woman? the same Celuta who is known to the whole colony for having rescued one of our bravest officers from the flames. Is it not possible that the beauty of this generous savage may have kindled passions which are at this day pouring their vengeance on the head of an innocent man? This I advance not on mere conjecture. During the past night I have examined all the papers; I have made enquiries, and pro-

cured a letter which I will read to the council."

Harlay then read a letter, dated from Fort Rosalie: it was written by Jacques, the grenadier, to his mother, who lived at New Orleans. The soldier expressed, with the utmost military frankness, his admiration of Captain Artaguette, his esteem for René, his pity for Celuta, and his contempt of Febriano and Ondouré.

"This letter," continued the advocate of René, "bears a stamp of honesty and truth, which cannot be mistaken. Ought justice to proceed so hastily? Is it not her duty to hear evidence in behalf of the accused? I know that a court-martial judges summarily and without appeal: but this rapid procedure excludes not equity. I need no other evidence of the innocence of the accused, than the step which delivers him up this day to the sword of the law. What! would you accept that head which he has come to offer you for the

head of an old man? It is easy to persecute one who is destitute of friends and protectors; it is easy to load him with such epithets as vagabond and traitor: the mere presence of my client has already disproved these base calumnies. Lastly, if his accusers persist in a charge which is supported only by unfounded allegations, I maintain that René is no longer a Frenchman, and that you have no right to sit in judgment upon him.

"What motives may have induced the man who stands before you to leave France, I know not; but that a person has a right to change his country is a point which cannot be disputed. Tyrants have fettered, enemies have persecuted me, I have been thwarted in my affections, and shall I not be permitted to seek elsewhere liberty, peace, and forgetfulness of friendship betrayed? Nature then must be more generous than men.—Nature, who opens her wilds to the unfortunate—Nature, who does not tell him, 'Thou shalt

dwell in this or that forest;' but who says, 'Chuse the abode most suitable to the disposition of thy soul.' Will you assert that the Savages of Louisiana are subjects of the king of France? Relinquish this odious pretension. These people, who enjoyed happiness and independence before we had introduced slavery and corruption into their native land, have been long enough oppressed. Soldier-judges, you wear this day two swords. God hath put into your hands the weapon of his power and that of his justice; beware how you return them to him notched or spotted; you blunt the former by striking at liberty, the latter you sully by spilling innocent blood."

The orator ceased. The audience were visibly moved. Adelaide, concealed from view in a corner, could not forbear applauding, and this was to Harlay the most delightful reward: this couple, who were about to be united by the ties of a happy love, singly undertook, by a touching sympathy, the de-

fence of a stranger who owed to passion all his misfortunes.

The accused was directed to withdraw; the judges deliberated. They were disposed to find René guilty; but they were divided on the question of right relative to a change of country. They deferred their sentence till the following day. "I knew you not," said René to Harlay, "when I refused to see you: I shall not thank you, because you have defended me but too ably. Tell the governor's daughter, that I would pray for her happiness if my prayers were not maledictions."

The brother of Amelia was conducted back to prison between two rows of slave-dealers, foreign seamen, and traders of all countries and of all colours, who overwhelmed him with insult, without knowing why.

On reaching the turret of the prison, René wished to write some letters. The keeper brought him a soiled sheet of paper, a little ink in a broken cup, and a stump of a pen;

then leaving the prisoner, he locked and bolted the door. René, as soon as he was alone, knelt down beside the camp bedstead, the bottom of which served him for a table, and lighted by a faint gleam which entered between the bars of an aperture that served for a window, he wrote to Chactas, charging the Sachem to translate the two letters which he enclosed to Celuta and Outougamiz.

The jailer's wife entered: a child six or seven years old assisted her to bring in supper. René asked this woman, if she had not some book to lend him: she answered that she had none but the Bible. The prisoner requested her to favour him with the loan of the sacred volume. Adelaide had not forgotten René, and when he asked for a lamp to pass the night, the keeper, softened by the presents of the governor's daughter, did not refuse that indulgence.

Next day a few words scarcely legible were found on the margin of the Bible. By the

fourth verse of the seventh chapter of Ecclesiasticus, were deciphered these words:

"How true it is that *the sorrow of the heart is a universal sore.* In grief every part of the body is pained; the bruised bones find no couch soft enough. To the unhappy every thing is sad, every thing bleeds, like his own heart: *it is a universal sore!*"

Other passages were commented upon in the same spirit.

The first verse of the tenth chapter of Job —"*My soul is weary of my life,*" was underlined.

One of the furious tempests of the spring equinox arose during the night: the winds roared, the waves of the river were swollen like those of the sea, and the rain fell in torrents. René fancied that he could distinguish moans amid the uproar of the storm: he closed the Bible, went to the window, listened, but heard nothing. He returned to the other extremity of the prison, and the moans

began afresh: the accents of a female voice distinctly met his ear. He took down the shutter which covered the grated window, looked between the bars, and by the flame of a lamp blown about by the wind, he perceived, as he thought, a woman seated on a stone opposite to the prison. "Unfortunate creature," cried René, "why do you thus expose yourself to the fury of the tempest? Are you in need of relief?"

Scarcely had he uttered these words when the figure rose and ran up beneath the window. Amelia's brother recognized the garb of an Indian woman: the flickering flame of a lamp at the same time threw a light on the pale face of Celuta—it was she! René fell on his knees, and with a voice interrupted by sobs, "Almighty God," said he, "save that woman!" Celuta had heard René's voice; the bowels of the wife and the mother yearned with grief and joy. The sister of Outougamiz was some moments without the power of ut-

terance; at length, recovering her speech, she cried, "Warrior, where art thou? I cannot see thee for the darkness and the rain. Forgive me; I annoy thee: I came to serve thee. Here is thy daughter."

"Wife," answered René, "thy virtue is too great. Retire; seek a shelter; expose not thy life and that of thine infant. Oh! who conducted thee hither?"

"Fear not," rejoined Celuta, "I am strong: am I not an Indian? If I have done any thing displeasing to thee, punish me, but send me not away."

This answer wounded René to the heart. "My beloved," said he, "angel of light, flee this land of darkness; thou art here in a den where men will devour thee. Seek some retreat, at least for the moment. Thou shalt come back, if thou wilt, when the storm is over."

This permission apparently overcame the resistance of Celuta. "Bless thy child,

René," said she, "before I go; she is weakly: the little bird has lacked food because its father could not go to pick up seeds for it in the savannah."

With these words the mother opened the wretched mantle soaked with rain, under which she kept her child sheltered; she lifted the innocent babe towards the window, to receive René's blessing. René put his hands between the bars, extended them over his little Amelia, and cried, "Child, thy mother is still left thee!"

Celuta again hid her darling in her bosom, and pretended to retire; but she attempted not to return to the canoes which had brought her, and stopped at some distance from the prison.

Celuta, Mila, and Outougamiz, had arrived at Fort Rosalie, at the moment when Adario, after strangling his grandson, had just been thrown into the dungeon: they were apprehended as relatives and accomplices of the

Sachem's and René's. The colonists conceived themselves on the point of being attacked by the Natchez: nothing was to be seen but men and women engaged in securing their moveables and domestic animals, throwing up redoubts, and digging ditches; while the soldiers, under arms, occupied all the avenues to the fort. The pressure of the crowd had separated Celuta from Mila and Outougamiz: the latter, in attempting to defend his companion, whose extreme loveliness provoked the gross insults of a party of drunken inhabitants, was barbarously maltreated.

Chactas had left Fort Rosalie when the daughter of Tabamica came thither to seek information concerning René's voyage. The young savages had taken the Sachem out of the tumult, and escorted him back to Natchez; but Celuta again found her accustomed protector. The danger had appeared so imminent as to induce Chepar to release Arta-

guette from arrest: the captain met with Celuta, as she was being hurried away to prison by order of Febriano, with an impure hope which he was at no pains to conceal. "I claim my sister," said Artaguette, pushing Febriano roughly aside; "I will be responsible to the commandant for her liberation. As for you, Sir," added he, darting at the wretch a look that penetrated to the bottom of his soul, "you know where to find me."

After conducting Celuta to a house on the bank of the river, the captain sent Jacques, the grenadier, in quest of Glazirne, the negress who spoke the language of the Natchez. This poor woman hastened to him with her child, and served as interpreter to another woman, unfortunate like herself. Artaguette then informed Celuta that René was gone to New Orleans, for the purpose of soliciting the release of Adario. "I could not detain him," said he, "and I have perhaps

but a moment for saving you yourself. Whither would you go?"

"To seek my husband," replied Celuta.

The negress had no difficulty to translate these simple words: the language and the hearts of wives are the same beneath the palm-trees of Africa and the magnolias of the Floridas.

Some Yazous happened to be at Fort Rosalie; they were ready to proceed to New Orleans; Artaguette proposed to consign his adoptive sister to the care of these Savages, and she joyfully accepted the offer. The captain gave her a letter for General Artaguette and another for Harlay, recommending the unfortunate couple to his brother and his friend. Celuta went on board, and the canoes spread their sails of rushes and feathers to the northern breeze.

The flotilla of the Yazous approached New Orleans the very day on which René was brought to trial. Celuta could not land till

evening: to crown her ill luck she had lost the captain's letters. The niece of Adario knew but very few French words; she requested the Indian chief, who frequently visited New Orleans for the purpose of bartering furs for arms, to enquire the fate of René. The savage had not gone far before he learned what Celuta wished to know: he was informed that the adopted son of Chactas was confined in the hut of blood,* and that his scull was to be dashed in pieces: such was the common town-talk.

The daughter of Tabamica, instead of being disheartened, felt her soul elevated by this account: she, the timid and the reserved, who blushed at the mere sight of a stranger, was suddenly inspired with courage to face a town filled with white men. She asked the chief if he knew where the hut of blood was situated, and if he could conduct her thither: on his replying in the affirmative, Celuta, carry-

* The prison.

ing Amelia at her bosom, followed her guide. The night was already advanced and the rain began to fall when they arrived at the black edifice. The Yazou, pointing with his finger, said to the Natchez woman, "There is what thou seekest," and quitting her, he returned to his canoes.

Left alone in the street, Celuta contemplated the lofty walls of the prison, its turrets, its folding-gates, its elliptic wickets, its narrow windows secured by iron bars; an awful abode, which had already the antique look of woe on this new earth, in a colony of but a day. The Europeans had not yet tombs in America before they had dungeons there: these were the only monuments of the past for that society without ancestors and without recollections.

Dismayed at the sight of this Bastille, Celuta at first remained motionless, and then knocked gently at a gate: the sentinel on duty forced the Indian to retire. She walked

round the prison, through streets more and more deserted: the heavens continuing overcast with clouds and the thunder-peals becoming more and more frequent, the unfortunate woman seated herself on the stone where she was descried by René from the top of the turret. Laying her child on her lap, she bent over it to screen it from the rain, and to warm it against her heart. An awful peal of thunder having caused Celuta to raise her head, she was struck by a ray of light darting through a grated window: from a secret instinct she kept her eyes fixed on this light, which was administering to the object of an attachment so tender and so faithful. Several times Celuta called René; the winds drowned her cries. She then began to sing songs of great length, the sad tune and plaintive words of which served at once to make her husband hear her and to lull her infant to sleep.

This poor young mother, after she had

been recognized by the brother of Amelia, retired in obedience to him. She pined at some distance; her limbs were benumbed; the rain and the cold had penetrated to her child, who was chilled at the maternal bosom.

Celuta, with sad looks, surveyed these inhabited deserts, where not a hut was opened to her distress, when she perceived near her a light that seemed to issue from the earth. A trap-door rose; an aged woman put up her head at the aperture to see whether the storm was beginning to abate. She perceived Celuta. "Ah, poor Indian!" exclaimed she, "come quickly down hither." She opened the trap-door completely, and holding out a wrinkled hand, assisted René's wife down the steps into the cellar, the entrance to which she closed again.

The place contained nothing but a bed covered with a woollen rug: a piece of coarse serge, nailed to a beam, served for a curtain to this couch. Two sticks of green wood, on a

large hearth, threw out a thick smoke, without being consumed: an iron lamp, hanging from a hook, burned in the sooty corner of this fire-place. A joint-stool stood beside a wheel, the spindle of which, full of cotton, indicated the employment of the inmate of this abode.

The old woman threw some chips on the fire, and placing her stool by it, begged Celuta to be seated.

"Mistress of the deep hut," said the Indian, "thou art a matron; thou must be the light of the council of the white warriors, if I may judge from thy hospitality. To thee belongs the mat: as for me I am still but a young mother."

With these words Celuta sat down on the hearth-stone, stripped her child of her soaked garments, and held her to the fire.

"Right! that's a dear now!" exclaimed the old woman in the language of the sister of Outougamiz. "Thou art a Natchez; I

lived a long time at Natchez. But, poor thing, how thou art drenched! how ill thou lookest! and thy child too!"

Celuta melted into tears on hearing such kind words uttered in her mother-tongue. She fell about the neck of the matron. "Wait, wait," said she. Hastening with heavy step to the bed, she brought the rug which she aired at the fire, stripped Celuta, in spite of her resistance, of part of her garments, and wrapped her and her suckling in the warm coverlet.

"Venerable white woman," said Celuta; "as kind as the black woman at the fort, I am very sorry not to have seen thee at my hut at Natchez."

The white woman heard her not; she was preparing some milk in a calebash. She offered it to the Indian, who was obliged to put it to her lips, lest she should displease her hostess.

The old woman then took the little Amelia

and put her into her apron; singing with a tremulous voice, she dandled the infant, which smiled at her, before the fire. Celuta looked on with the eyes of a mother, while all her thoughts were fixed on her husband.

"Jacques was just like this when he was little," said the dame; "pretty dear! never crying! Only his hair was darker than this darling's."

"What Jacques was that, mother?" asked Celuta.

"Why," briskly replied the old woman, "my boy Jacques, to be sure! every body knows him; one of the comeliest grenadiers in the king's army, and one of the bravest too. Excellent fellow! 'tis he who supports me; without him I could not live, for I am too old to work. I am very sorry that I have not the last letter which my son wrote me, I would read it to thee: if Captain Artaguette knew what Jacques says of him he would be very proud. They went together, Jacques

hand the captain, to seek a gentleman named René, in a large cavern ——"

Celuta interrupted this effusion of maternal pride and affection by again throwing her fair arms about her hostess. "Great Spirit!" exclaimed she, sobbing, "art thou the mother of that poor warrior, the companion of my brother Artaguette! Is it the mother of that warrior who shelters me in her hut?"

"What is the matter?" asked the old woman. "What is the matter!" repeated Celuta; "am I not the wife of René?"

"What!" exclaimed the mother of Jacques in her turn, "art thou that Celuta who saved the captain! and would they put thy husband to death for that!" The blow struck Celuta to the heart: she swooned.

Having soon recovered her senses through the attentions of her charitable hostess, she said to her: "White woman, it is day-light; let me return to the hut of blood; I must go back to my husband." The old woman

thought this but right; she put on her head a small white cap, threw over her shoulders a short red cloak, and taking her crutch-stick in her hand, prepared to conduct the Indian to the prison.

"I cannot blame thee," said she to Celuta. "If Jacques were to do a good action, and to be sent to the galleys for it, I would go along with him."

Celuta, having resumed her Indian tunic and wrapped her daughter in the dried skins, ascended the perpendicular steps that led to the trap-door, the old woman following her with difficulty. When they found themselves in the street, the storm had passed off. The sun, emerging from a gloomy night, like the two wonders of conjugal love and maternal affection issuing from their darksome abode, poured a flood of light over river, country, and town.

"We are just at the prison," said the mother of Jacques; "they will not open the

door to thee, and thou wilt not be able to speak to René: take my advice, and let us go at once to the governor." Celuta acceded to the proposal of her venerable hostess.

They heard by the way a confused sound of bells and music. The bell tolled for some person at the point of death; the old woman crossed herself, and proceeded toward the government-house, where the music proclaimed a festival.

In honour of the approaching union of Adelaide and the advocate of René, a ball had been given that night, notwithstanding the trial of Amelia's brother and the tremendous storm: it was in the character of the governor not to make any alteration in his arrangements, let what would happen. The ball was kept up till after day-break. The mother of Jacques and Celuta entered the first courts of the palace; the white and black slaves in attendance on their masters thronged round the strangers: bursts of

laughter and insults were lavished on misfortune and youth, which thus presented themselves under the protection of age and indigence. "If Jacques were here," said the old woman, "how soon he would oblige you to make way for me!"

The two women advanced with some difficulty to the sentries on duty at the doors; they recognized the mother of their comrade, and suffered her to pass. Further on she was again stopped by the porter. The ball was by this time nearly over, and the company were beginning to leave the palace. Adelaide was standing at a window with Harlay; the generous couple were engaged in earnest converse, apparently unmindful of the occasion; as they looked down upon the court, they saw the strangers turned back by the porter. Adelaide, struck by the Indian garb, beckoned to the old woman to approach the balcony. "My dear young lady," said the mother of Jacques, "this is the wife of

René; she wishes to speak to your father; and they will not admit us."

"The wife of the prisoner!" exclaimed Adelaide; "the young savage who saved Captain Artaguette!" Adelaide, following the impulse of her excellent heart, ran to the door, and arrayed as she was in her brilliant ball-dress, hastened out to the unfortunate Celuta. The Indian held forth her child to her, saying: "Young white woman, the Great Spirit will bless thee. Thou wilt have a little warrior, who will be happier than my daughter."

"How sorry I am," said Adelaide, "that I cannot understand her! I never heard a sweeter voice."

In all the pomp of her adversity, Celuta looked divinely beautiful: her pale brow was shaded by her black hair, and her large eyes beamed with love and melancholy; her child, which she carried gracefully at her bosom, [illegible]ed her smiling face beside the sorrowful

visage of her mother: never did misfortune, innocence, and virtue, confer such charms on each other.

While the bystanders were pressing round Celuta, a voice was heard without among the crowd, saying: "You shall not pass!" A masculine voice answered the threats which followed, but in an unknown language. The uproar increased; a savage, defending a female, was struggling with the soldiers, and after being pushed to and fro, succeeded in his attempt to reach the door of the palace. "I am come," said he, his eyes flashing fire, "to seek my friend by command of the Manitou, (shewing his gold chain); I would not harm any one: but is there a warrior here who dares prevent me from passing?"

"My brother!" exclaimed Celuta.

"Ah Outougamiz!" said Mila, "here is thy sister!"

The mother of Jacques explained this col-

loquy to Adelaide, by whose desire all the savages went into the palace.

"Good Manitou!" said Mila, embracing her sister-in-law, "how I hate these white skins! We have knocked at their huts to solicit hospitality, and they were ready to beat us. And then such large ugly huts! such ferocious warriors!"

"Thou talkest too much," said Outougamiz. "Let us seek Ononthio;* he must instantly restore my friend to me."

Outougamiz quitted Celuta, and, followed by Mila, pushed through the crowd in the halls. The spectators stared in astonishment at this singular couple, who, wholly engaged by one sentiment, manifested no more surprize amidst this new world than if they had been in their native forests.

"Declare not war against me," said Outougamiz, continuing to advance; "you will repent it." Swinging his club, he opened a

* The governor.

wide passage for Mila. The confusion became general: the music stopped; the ball ceased; the ladies fled. The rumbling of the carriages which were departing, the sound of the drum collecting the soldiers together, and the voices of the officers calling them to arms, increased the panic and confusion. Adelaide, the mother of Jacques, Celuta, Mila, Outougamiz, were borne down and separated by the throng; and the governor was highly incensed at this scene.

The council of war had met to pronounce its sentence, which was to be read to René in the prison. The charges, being examined afresh, appeared inadequate to justify the award of the penalty of death; but the brother of Amelia was sentenced to be transported to France, as a disturber of the peace of the colony. A king's ship was to sail in a few hours: the governor, irritated at the uproar which had taken place on René's account, ordered the sentence to be put into immediate

execution, and the prisoner to be conveyed on board the frigate.

René was made acquainted at one and the same time with the sentence which exiled him from Louisiana, and the order for its immediate execution: he would have rejoiced to die, but the idea of banishment appalled him. To transport the brother of Amelia to France was to carry him back to the source of his afflictions. This man, a stranger on the earth, sought in vain a spot of ground on which he might rest his head: wherever he had shown his face, he had created misery. What should he meet with again in Europe? an unhappy woman. What should he leave behind in America? an unhappy woman. In the world and in the wilderness his passage had been marked by sufferings. The fatality which attended his steps drove him from both hemispheres: he could not land upon any shore but he raised storms there by his presence: without country between two conti-

tries, this vast, independent, tempestuous soul, had no asylum left but the ocean.

In vain René begged that he might not suffer the punishment of existence; in vain he petitioned that the penalty of living might be commuted to a merciful sentence of death: no attention was paid to him. He desired to speak with Celuta; it was alleged that she was not his lawful wife, and he was denied all communication with her, to put an end to scenes which, it was said, disturbed the public tranquillity.

The arrival of a party of Yazous, followed by that of Outougamiz, had given rise to a thousand rumours. It was asserted that the Savages had entered the town in great numbers, for the purpose of rescuing their chief, the white warrior. These reports appeared so alarming to the governor, that he caused a file of infantry and cavalry to line the way which René would have to go from the prison to the river.

The palace of the government was not far from the prison. Celuta, following the course of the multitude, soon found herself again before the gloomy edifice, the aspect of which was but too deeply impressed upon her memory. There the popular torrent had spread itself out and stopped. Celuta knew not what was going forward; but, on seeing this concourse about the hut of blood, she was aware that some new disaster threatened René. Repelled by a populace inimical to the Savages, she found pity from the soldiers alone; they admitted her into their ranks. Armed hands are almost always generous; to adversity nothing is so friendly as glory.

Two hours had thus elapsed, when a general bustle announced the departure of the prisoner. A piquet of dragoons, with drawn swords, came forth from the inner court of the prison; it was followed by a detachment of infantry, and behind this detachment, sur-

rounded by other soldiers, walked the brother of Amelia.

Celuta sprang forward, and fell with her child at the feet of her husband: René stooped over them, and blessed them once more, but his voice failed him to bid adieu to the mother and daughter. The train paused; tears trickled from the eyes of the soldiers. Celuta rose; she clasped René in her arms. "Whither are ye conducting this warrior?" cried she. "Why would ye prevent me from going along with him? Is not his country mine?"

"My Celuta," said René, "return to thy forests; go and adorn with thy virtues some wilderness which Europeans have not yet polluted. Leave me to endure my fate, in which I have already made thee but too large a sharer!"

"Here are my hands," replied Celuta; "let them be confined with fetters; let me be forced like Adario to toil in the field: I shall

be happy so René is at my side. Take pity on thy daughter; I have borne her in my bosom. Allow me to follow thee as thy slave, as the black woman of the whites. Wilt thou refuse me this favour?"

This scene began to melt the merciless crowd, which a moment before deemed the sentence too mild, and would have hailed the execution of René with shouts of joy. The officer appointed to carry the judgment of the court into effect, ordered the soldiers to separate the unhappy couple, and to proceed; but a savage, stooping down and crawling under the bellies of the horses, made his way to René and Celuta, exclaiming: "Here I am once more! I saved him from the Illinois; I will save him from your hands, warriors of the white skin!"

"'Tis true," said Mila, rushing also from among the crowd.

"And if Jacques had been here," cried an

old woman, "all this would not have happened."

Forced with regret to obey, the soldiers drove back Celuta, Mila, Outougamiz, and the mother of Jacques: René was conducted to the bank of the Meschacebé. The long-boat of the frigate, manned by twelve stout seamen and a guard of marines, was waiting for the prisoner: they made him step into her. At the sound of the pilot's whistle, the twelve sailors plunged their oars at once into the tide: the boat glided on the waves like a smooth stone which, thrown by the hand of a boy, alights on the water, rises again, bounds and rebounds, skimming the surface of the river.

Celuta had crawled to the quay. A frigate rode at anchor in the middle of the Meschacebé, dipping her head a little into the river: her pennon floated at the mainmast; her sails were half unfurled; seamen were to be seen on all the yards, and there was a great bustle

on the deck. The boat hailed the ship: her crew went on board; and the boat herself was hoisted up and slung at the stern of the vessel. A flash and a smoke suddenly issued from the frigate; the signal for departure was heard, and answered by long acclamations from the shore. Celuta perceived René, and fell senseless on the bales of merchandise which covered the quay.

Just then a savage leaped into the river, and strove to swim after the ship, which flew before a stiff breeze; while an Indian woman struggled to disengage herself from the grasp of those who held her, to prevent her from plunging into the water.

A distant murmur was heard; it drew nearer: the crowd, which had begun to disperse, again collected. An officer advanced, saying to his men: "Where is she? where is she?" and they answered: "Here, captain" —pointing to Celuta, extended on the bales. Artaguette sank at the feet of Celuta. "Wo-

man," cried he, "may thy Spirit, in the abode of peace where it now dwells, receive the homage of him who owes his life to thee, and whom thou honouredst with the name of brother!"

At these words, the soldiers fell on one knee like their captain; the crowd, catching that enthusiasm which sometimes touches the most vulgar minds, knelt too, and prayed for the Indian: the noise of the river lashing its shores accompanied that prayer, and the hand of God lay heavy on the heads of all these men, involuntarily humbled at the feet of virtue.

Celuta manifested no sign of life; the profound lethargy into which she was plunged exactly resembled death; but her daughter lived on her bosom, and seemed to communicate some warmth to the heart of the mother. The head of René's wife drooped over the face of Amelia, as if, desirous of giving

a last kiss to her infant, she had expired in that maternal act.

At this moment some one came to inform Artaguette that close by there was another young Indian woman who did nothing but weep. "'Tis Mila!" exclaimed the captain; "mention to her my name, and she will come to me." The soldiers brought Mila in their arms, with dishevelled hair, her face bruised, and her garments torn. No sooner did she recognize Artaguette than she threw herself on his bosom, crying: "Yes, he is a good white skin! he will keep me from dying!" and clinging about the captain's neck, she clasped him closely in her embrace.

All at once, perceiving Celuta, she loosed Artaguette and fell upon her friend, crying, "Celuta! my mother! my more than mother! sister of Outougamiz! wife of René! here is Mila! here she is alone! what shall I do to inter thy bones, for thou art not at

Natchez! Here are none but wicked people, who care nothing about graves."

The soldiers stepped aside, all of them repeating the words, "Come on! come on mother!" and the mother of Jacques with her white cap, her scarlet cloak and her distaff, advanced into the circle of the grenadiers.

"Captain," said she to Artaguette, "here is the mother of Jacques, who is also come to see what is the matter. I am very old to be sure, as Counsellor Harlay says, and he is an honest man, thank God, for there are very few besides him."

The aged dame espied Celuta. "Good God!" exclaimed she, "is not this the young woman to whom I gave some refreshment last night? How she spoke of you, captain!" —"Poor old creature!" said Artaguette, "the only one in a whole town to afford shelter, warmth, and food, to Celuta! And

thou thyself supported out of the pay of this worthy soldier!"

The mother of Jacques attentively examined Celuta; she took hold of one of her hands. "Go thy way, white matron," said Mila to her, thou knowest not how to weep."

"As well as thou dost," replied the venerable Frenchwoman in Natchez.

"Sorceress," exclaimed the affrighted Mila, "who taught thee the language of the red skin?"

"Captain," said the mother of Jacques, without heeding Mila, "this young woman is not dead: quick! help!" A thousand voices repeated, "She is not dead!"

Celuta actually manifested some signs of life. "Come grenadiers," said the old dame, who was allowed to do what she pleased, "we must save this woman who saved your captain; let us carry mother and child to General Artaguette's."

A dragoon lent his cloak, on which Celuta was laid; Mila took little Amelia in her arms, and wept no more but for Outougamiz and René. Four soldiers, gently lifting the cloak by the four corners, bore away the daughter of Tabamica.

The sun, which was setting, threw a golden net-work over the savannahs and the flat tops of the hills on the west bank of the river; on the east bank, the windows of the metropolis of Louisiana glowed in the radiance of declining day: the steeples rose above the waters like darts of fire. The roseate waves of the Meschacebé rolled along between these two scenes, while the canoes of the savages and the ships of the Europeans exhibited their masts or their sails tinged with the crimson of eve.

Laid upon a couch, in an apartment in the house of the brother of Captain Artaguette, Celuta had not yet spoken: her half-open eyes were covered with a mist which inter-

cepted the light. Repeated shouts of *Vive le Roi!* were heard without; the door of the room flew open with a crash. Jacques, the grenadier, bareheaded, without coat, his loins girt with a broad belt, appeared: "Here they are!" said he. René entered with Outougamiz: all present were struck speechless with astonishment and joy.

"Captain," resumed the grenadier, addressing Artaguette, "I have executed your orders; but the packets were given to me too late: the frigate had sailed. I ran as fast as I could across the morass to overtake her at Grand Detour: luckily she was obliged to drop her anchor, the wind having become contrary. I swam off for the ship, and in the middle of the river I met with this terrible savage, whom I saw in the battle near Fort Rosalie: he was near drowning when I fell in with him."

Mila had flown into the arms of Outougamiz; René was beside Celuta; Jacques sup-

ported his aged mother, who wiped his face and his hair: Adelaide and Harlay entered and joined their friends.

Celuta began to utter a few inarticulate words of extreme sweetness. "She comes from the country of the angels," said the captain; "she has brought back their language with her." Mila, fixing her eyes on Adelaide, said, "'Tis Celuta come to life again in the form of a white woman." All hearts were full of the best feelings: religion, love, friendship, gratitude, were blended with that relief which succeeds a severe affliction. It was not, indeed, a complete return to happiness, but it was a gleam of sunshine through the clouds of the tempest. The soul of man, so susceptible to hope, eagerly catches at this gleam, alas, too transient! "Every body is weeping here," said Mila; "and yet it is just as if they were laughing."

The meeting of all these persons, apparently so mysterious, was very easily ac-

counted for. Captain Artaguette had successively saved and delivered, at Fort Rosalie, René, Celuta, Mila, and Outougamiz. Celuta, Mila, and Outougamiz, had followed René to New Orleans, all three actuated by attachment to misfortune, all three arriving within a few hours of each other, to participate in scenes of woe and oppression.

Ondouré, on the other hand, had found himself on the point of being caught in his own snares. Though he suggested an attack by Chepar on Chactas and Adario, to rid himself of the yoke of those two elders, still he was not prepared for such a scene as that which resulted from the slavery of the latter Sachem. He was apprehensive lest these outrages, by producing too speedy a rupture between the French and the Indians, might frustrate his whole plan. In this emergency, the Edile, ever fertile in resources, lost no time in offering the cession of the lands as a ransom for Adario; Chepar accepted the

proposal, and Artaguette was dispatched with the convention to New Orleans.

The captain arrived at the very moment when the council had just pronounced sentence upon René. Artaguette, after he had acquainted the governor with the pacification of the disturbances, claimed the prisoner as his friend and brother. He exhibited letters from Europe, proving that René belonged to a family of consequence. This discovery operated more powerfully than any other consideration on a man who was at once prudent and ambitious.

"If you think," said the governor to the captain, "that this business has been conducted with too much precipitation, it is still time to dispatch counter-orders; but let me hear no more of this René, in whose behalf Harlay and Adelaide have been incessantly teasing me for the last three days."

The order for the release of the prisoner was signed; but, being delivered too late, it

would have been useless but for the zeal of Jacques, the grenadier, whom the captain had brought with him. While this faithful soldier followed the frigate, Artaguette, informed of all the circumstances of the appearance of Celuta, Mila, and Outougamiz, went in quest of these unfortunate creatures, and was in consequence brought by the soldiers to the place where he found Celuta apparently lifeless.

Good luck, or what seemed to be good luck compared with the afflictions of the preceding day, restored to the wife of René, if not all her strength, at least all her love. Captain Artaguette and his brother, the general, proposed to give their friends a little treat very different from that of which Celuta had a glimpse at the palace of the governor. Adelaide and Harlay were the first persons invited; Jacques and his mother too were among the guests. The pleasant villa of the general had been assigned to the strangers,

and Mila and Outougamiz made themselves as much at home as if they had been in their own hut.

No sooner did the simple couple see all about them happy, than they ceased to notice any individual. After sauntering through the apartments, and looking at themselves in the mirrors, they retired to a closet full of the different articles of female attire.

"Well," said Mila, "what thinkest of this fine hut?"

"I!" said Outougamiz, "I think nothing about it."

"What! not think any thing!" exclaimed Mila, angrily.

"Thou now talkest like a white skin," replied Outougamiz, "and I understand thee not. Thou knowest that I am none of the shrewdest: when René is taken prisoner by the Illinois or the French, I go in quest of him. I have no occasion to think for that; I

will not think at all, for this I verily believe, is René's evil Manitou."

"Outougamiz," said Mila, crossing her arms and seating herself on the carpet, "thou wilt make me die with shame among all these white skins; I must take thee back with me very speedily. I have done a silly thing to accompany thee. What will my mother say? But thou wilt marry me, wilt thou not?"

"Certainly," said Outougamiz, "but in my hut, and not in this large disagreeable cabin. Didst thou notice that Sachem dressed in black, who hung against the wall without stirring, but whose eyes followed me about every where." *

"It is a Spirit," answered Mila. "I like the great hall where I saw myself in four places at once,† very well; but it is only fit for the Whites, who have more bodies than souls."

"Is it not the hall of shades that thou

* A portrait. † Mirrors.

meanest?" said Outougamiz: "I don't like it at all: I saw several Milas, and knew not which of them to love. Let us return to our forests, we are not comfortable here."

"Thou art in the right," said Mila, "and I am afraid of being tried, like René."

"How tried?" exclaimed Outougamiz.

"Why," rejoined Mila, "do not I love thee? do not I feel pity for those who suffer? am I not just, noble, disinterested? Is not this enough to cause me to be tried and put to death, since it was for this that they were going to cleave René's scull?"

"Let us begone, Mila," said Outougamiz. "Light cloud of the moon of flowers, morning would not here tinge thee in an azure sky; thou wouldst not shed dew on the grass of the valley; thou wouldst not float along on fragrant breezes. Beneath the foggy sky of the white skins thou wouldst be always gloomy; the rain would fall upon thy bosom, and thou wouldst be rent by the wind of the tempest."

Mila recollected that the hour for the entertainment approached. She had been told that every thing in the closet was for her: she placed herself before the glass, trying on the garments, which she knew not how to arrange; she nevertheless contrived to make up with veils, feathers, ribbons, and flowers, a dress which Greece would not have scorned. Followed by Outougamiz, she repaired with a mixture of pride and bashfulness to the dining-room.

Celuta too was attired, but in the fashion of the Indians: she refused a European dress, in spite of the solicitations of Adelaide. Reclined on a couch, she received the demonstrations of kindness lavished upon her with a charming confusion, but without that air of inferiority imparted in civilized countries by a servile education: her face exhibited only that glow which favours conferred call up from a grateful heart to an open brow.

Mila was the delight of the party. All

eyes were fixed with admiration on Outougamiz, whose prodigies of friendship René had related. "How he resembles his sister!" said Adelaide, whose looks were rivetted on him. "What a brother and sister!" repeated she. At the mention of brother and sister René hung down his head.

"White Mila," said the future wife of Outougamiz to Adelaide, "thou laughest, and yet I have tied my girdle as well as thou hast done thine." René acted as interpreter. Adelaide asked Mila, why she called her White Mila? Mila applied her hand to the heart of Harlay, her neighbour, and then to that of Adelaide, who blushed, at which she began to laugh. "There now," cried she, "ask me again why I call thee White Mila! That is just as I blush when I look at Outougamiz."

Man cannot break the chain of his destiny: during the repast a letter from Fort Rosalie was brought to Artaguette. This letter,

written by Father Souël, who had just returned to Natchez, informed the captain, that a fresh accusation against René had been transmitted to the governor-general; that, notwithstanding the release of Adario, strong apprehensions were still entertained; that several messengers had been dispatched from Natchez on an unknown errand; that Ondouré charged the mission of these messengers to the account of Chactas and Adario, whereas it was probable that these secret negotiations with the Indian nations were actually the work of Ondouré and the female chief. Father Souël added, that if René had been released, he should advise him not to tarry a moment at New Orleans, where his life appeared not to be safe.

After dinner Artaguette communicated this letter to René, and begged him to return immediately to Natchez. "As for me," said he, "I shall set out without delay for Fort Rosalie, so that we shall soon meet again.

For Celuta you have nothing to fear: it would be impossible for her to accompany you now; but my brother, Adelaide, and Harlay will take care of her. When she is quite recovered, she may return to her own country, and you may come to meet her at some distance from New Orleans."

René wished to apprize Celuta of his departure. The physician, however, opposed this intention, saying, that she was not able to bear a violent and prolonged emotion. The captain undertook to communicate the sad intelligence to his Indian sister, when René should have been gone some time; flattering himself that he should render the shock less severe by the precautions of friendship.

The brother of Amelia, before he left New Orleans, thanked his entertainers, Jacques and his mother, General Artaguette, Adelaide, and Harlay. "No doubt," said he, "you think me a strange creature; but perhaps the

remembrance of me will be less disagreeable than my presence."

René then went to his wife; he found her almost happy; she held her infant asleep on her bosom. He pressed mother and child to his heart with a warmth unusual with him: should he ever see Celuta again? when and under what circumstances should they meet? Nothing was more painful to contemplate than this happiness of Celuta's: how little of it had she enjoyed! and she seemed to relish it at a moment of separation which might be everlasting! The Indian, herself alarmed at the affectionate embraces of her husband, said to him, "Art thou taking leave of me?" The brother of Amelia made no reply: "wo to whomsoever was clasped in the arms of that man! he stifled happiness!"

The same night René left New Orleans with Outougamiz and Mila. They went up the river in an Indian canoe. On their ar-

rival at Natchez, an unexpected sight presented itself.

The colonists were quietly engaged in breaking up the land for cultivation, to the very centre of the great village and about the temple of the sun; while the savages eyed their operations with indifference, and seemed to have abandoned to the stranger the soil in which reposed the bones of their ancestors.

The three travellers saw Adario passing at some distance; they ran to him: at the sound of their steps the Sachem turned his head, and started with horror on perceiving the brother of Amelia. The old man shook hands with his nephew, but refused to take the hand of the husband of his niece, of René, who had just offered his own life to redeem that of Adario!

"Uncle," said Outougamiz, "wouldst thou have me cleave the sculls of those strangers, who are sowing in the fields of our country?"—"All is settled," replied Adario, gloomily, and turned off into a wood.

"Outougamiz," said Mila, "the Sachems have settled every thing; we have nought now to think of but our marriage." Mila went home to her parents, whose anger she had to encounter; she appeased it, however, by informing them that she was about to become the wife of Outougamiz. René repaired to the hut of Chactas, who was on the point of setting out on a mission to the English in Georgia.

Ondouré, having become master of the nation, had kept from the knowledge of Chactas a plan which the virtue of that Sachem would have reprobated: he was sending the venerable man out of the way, that he might not be present at the general council of the Indians, in which the plan of the conspirator was to be developed.

The noble and incomprehensible René kept profound silence towards Chactas and the rest of the Natchez respecting what he had done for Adario; he had nothing left from his good action but the dangers which

he had encountered. The brother of Amelia only talked to his adopted father of the surprize he had felt on seeing the French ploughing up the ground contiguous to the Grove of Death: the old man informed René that the cession of the lands was the price of the release of Adario. Chactas knew not the depth of Ondouré's designs; he knew not that the cession of the lands of the Natchez was intended to separate the colonists, to draw them into the midst of the enemy's country, and thus to facilitate their extermination. By this infernal combination Ondouré, in delivering Adario, won the affection of the Natchez, in like manner as he obtained the confidence of the French by paying them a ransom for Adario—a ransom which was destined to be so fatal to them.

"For the rest," said Chactas to René, "the Sachems have enjoined me a long absence: they pretend that my experience may be of service in a negotiation with the Euro-

peans. My great age and my blindness cannot excuse me from this mission: the more authority I am supposed to possess, the more it is incumbent on me to set an example of obedience, at a time when nobody obeys. What should I do here? The great chief is gone; adversity has rendered Adario intractable; my voice is no longer listened to; an untoward generation has sprung up and scorns the counsels of the elders. People shun me; they conceal secrets from me: the Great Spirit grant that they occasion not the ruin of my country!"

"As for thee, René, preserve thy life for the nation which has adopted thee; banish from thy heart the passions which thou lovest to cherish there, and thou mayst yet see happy days. For my part, I am approaching the end of my race. At the close of my pilgrimage here below, I am about to traverse the wilds in which I began it, those wilds which I visited sixty years ago with Atala.

Separated from my passions and my first misfortunes by so long an interval, my sightless eyes will not even be able to see the new forests which cover my former traces and those of the daughter of Lopez. Nothing that existed at the time of my captivity among the Muscogulges exists at this day; the world with which I was acquainted has passed away: I am now the last tree left standing out of an ancient forest—a tree which time has forgotten to overthrow."

René left his father's with his heart wrung, and anticipating fresh sorrows. On reaching his hut he found it in ruins: he seated himself on a bundle of dry reeds in a corner of the hearth, the ashes of which were scattered by the winds. Absorbed in thought, he was sorrowfully revolving his afflictions in his mind, when a negro brought him a letter sent by Father Souël: that missionary had been detained a few days longer at Fort Rosalie. The letter came from France; it was from

the superior of the nunnery of ——, and informed René of the decease of Sister Amelia of Mercy.

This intelligence, received in a profound solitude, amid the ruins of the hut forsaken by Celuta, awakened in the heart of the unhappy young man recollections so poignant, that for a few moments he was seized with a real phrenzy. He ran about in the forests like a maniac. Father Souël, who met with him, went immediately in quest of Chactas; the old sage and the grave ecclesiastic found means to allay in some degree the anguish of Amelia's brother. By dint of entreaty, the Sachem obtained from his hapless son a recital which he had long solicited in vain. René appointed a day for unbosoming to Chactas and Father Souël the secrets of his soul. He gave his arm to the Sachem, whom he conducted at dawn of day to the foot of a sassafras-tree on the bank of the Meschacebé: the missionary presently arrived at the

place of meeting. Seated between his two old friends, the brother of Amelia revealed to them the mysterious grief which had embittered his existence.

RENÉ.

"I cannot (said René), in commencing my story, suppress a sentiment of shame. The tranquillity of your own hearts, venerable old men, and the calmness of nature around me, make me blush for the trouble and agitation of my bosom.

"How much you must despise me while you pity! How contemptible must my causes of eternal disquiet appear to you! You who have drunk to the dregs the cup of life—what must you think of a young man without strength of mind or virtue, whose torments reside in himself, and who has nothing to complain of but those evils of which he is himself the cause? Ah, do not condemn him: he has been already punished but too severely!

"I cost my mother her life in coming into the world; I was extracted from her bosom by the knife. I had a brother, on whom my father laid his blessing, because in him he saw his eldest hope. As for me, delivered in my early infancy to the hands of strangers, I was destined to be educated and to live far from the paternal roof.

"My disposition was impetuous, my temper unequal and fiery. By turns noisy and joyous, silent and sad, I at one moment would assemble about me my youthful companions, and then, abandoning suddenly their society, I would seat myself at a distance from them, to contemplate a flying cloud, or listen to the rain pattering on the leaves.

"Each autumn I returned to the mansion of my fathers, which was situated amidst forests, and near a lake, in a remote part of the country.

"Timid and constrained in the presence of my father, I found no joy or content but when

in the society of my sister Amelia. A sweet conformity of dispositions and tastes closely united me to my sister: she was rather older than myself. We loved to climb the rock together, to sail upon the lake, and to wander through the woods at the fall of the leaf; rambles the recollection of which even now fills my soul with delight. O illusions of childhood and of country, may you never lose your sweetness!

"Sometimes we would walk in silence, listening to the hollow moans of the autumn winds, or the noise of the dry and rustling leaves which we trod upon in our wanderings; or we would, in our innocent play, pursue the swallow through the meadows, or follow the shifting rainbow over the misty hills; and sometimes we would lisp and murmur verses inspired by the sight of nature before us. While young, I loved the Muses: there is nothing so poetical as a young heart of sixteen in all the warmth and freshness of its feelings.

The morning of life is like that of spring, full of purity, images, and harmony.

"On Sundays and holidays I often heard in the depths of the forests, through the trees, the sound of the distant clock calling the rustics to prayer. Leaning against the trunk of an elm, I would listen in silence to the solemn murmur. Each clang of the bell carried to my simple bosom a feeling of the innocence of country life, the calm of solitude, the charm of religion, and the delicious melancholy which mingled with the recollection of my earliest infancy. Oh what man is there whose heart is so ill organized as never to have echoed to the sound of the bells of his native place—of those bells which were joyfully rung about his cradle, which announced the event of his birth, which marked the first beauty of his heart, and which published to all the places around the holy joy of his father, and the agonies and yet more ineffable delight of his mother? Every feeling is comprised in the

enchanted reveries into which we are plunged by the sound of our native bells; religion, family, country, both the cradle and the tomb, the past and the future.

"Perhaps, however, Amelia and I enjoyed in a higher degree than many others those grave and tender emotions; we had both in the depths of our hearts a shade of sadness, which we inherited from God or our mother.

"Meanwhile my father was seized with a disorder which, in a few days, carried him to the tomb. He expired in my arms. I learned to know what death was from the lips of the being from whom I derived my life. The impression was deep, and it lasts to this hour. It was the first time that the immortality of the soul was clearly developed to me. I could not believe that this inanimate body had been to me the source of intellect and thought: and in a holy grief which approached to joy, I hoped one day to rejoin the spirit of my father.

"Another phenomenon confirmed me in this lofty idea. The features of my father had assumed in the coffin an air of sublimity. Might not that astonishing mystery be an indication of our immortality? Why should not death, which knows all things, have graven upon the brow of its victim the secrets of another world? Why might there not be even in the grave some grand vision of eternity?

"Amelia, overwhelmed with grief, had retired to the recesses of a tower, where she listened to the hymn of the priests attending the funeral procession, and the melancholy sounds of the passing bell, as they echoed under the vaulted roofs of the Gothic castle.

"I followed my father to his last abode: the earth closed over his mortal remains; eternity and oblivion pressed upon them with all their weight: in the evening the careless wanderer trampled over his grave; and, but for his son

and his daughter, my father already was as if he had never been.

"I was now obliged to quit the house of my father, which had become the inheritance of my brother; and I withdrew with Amelia to reside with some old relations.

"Thus arrested at the very entrance of the deceitful ways of life, I considered them one after another without venturing to pursue any. Amelia often conversed with me on the happiness of a religious life: she told me that I was the only tie that bound her to the world, and her eyes rested sadly on my face.

"My heart was melted by the pious conversations of my sister, and I often turned my steps towards a monastery which stood near my abode; at one time I was even tempted to bury myself in it. Happy are they who have ended their voyage without even quitting the harbour, and who have not, like me, dragged on long and useless days upon the earth!

"Europeans, who are continually agitated, are forced to build themselves solitudes. The more tumultuous and stormy our hearts are, the more peace and silence attract us. These hospitable houses of my country opened to the weak and the unfortunate, are often hidden in valleys, carrying to the heart at once a vague feeling of misfortune and the hope of a shelter; or sometimes they are situated on hills, whence the religious soul, like a plant of the mountains, seems to lift itself towards heaven to offer its perfumes to the skies.

"I yet see before me the majestic contrast of woods and waters which surround that antique abbey where I wished to shelter myself for ever from the caprices of fortune: in fancy I still wander at the decline of day among its echoing and solitary cloisters. When the moon half lit up the pillars of the arcades, and threw their shadows on the opposite wall, I would stop to contemplate the cross which

marked the field of the dead, and the long grass which grew between the grave-stones. O ye mortals who, having lived far from the world, have but passed from the silence of life to the quiet of the grave, with what disgust of the earth did the sight of your tombs fill my bosom!

"Whether from natural fickleness or prejudice against a monastic life, I changed my resolution, and determined to travel. I bade adieu to my sister: she pressed me in her arms with a feeling which seemed to resemble joy, as if she had been happy to quit me: and I could not repress a bitter reflection on the inconstancy of all human friendship.

"In the mean time, full of ardour, I launched upon the stormy ocean of the world, of whose ports and quicksands I was equally ignorant. I first visited the lands of people now no more: I sat down upon the ruins of Rome and of Greece, countries once full of human power and human ingenuity. Their

palaces are now buried in the dust; the mausoleums of their kings hidden under thorns. O the strength of nature and the weakness of man! a blade of grass is often found to pierce through the hardest marble of these tombs, which none of those lying below, however powerful, can raise from above them!

"Sometimes a single lofty column would rear itself alone in the desert, as a grand feeling rises, at intervals, in a heart which time and misfortune have laid desolate.

"I meditated on these monuments, amidst all the accidents and at all the hours of the day. Sometimes I gazed on the majestic setting of the same sun which had witnessed the foundation of all these cities, as it gleamed over their ruins; and sometimes the moon, rising in an unclouded sky, would shine between two half-broken funeral urns upon the pale monuments of the dead. Often, by the rays of that planet which inspires reveries, I have imagined I

saw the Genius of Memory seated pensively by my side.

"But I soon grew weary of searching among coffins, where but too often I only disturbed the ashes of guilt.

"I wished to see whether the living inhabitants of these countries would offer to my contemplation more virtues and fewer vices than their vanished ancestors. As I wandered one day through a great city, and passed behind a palace in a retired and deserted square, I perceived a statue which pointed with its finger to a spot famous by a sacrifice.* I was struck with the silence of the spot; the wind alone moaned round the tragic marble. Workmen were reposing in utter indifference at the feet of the statue, or whistled as they worked. I asked them to what this monument referred: some could scarcely tell me, and others were totally ignorant of the catastrophe to which it referred. Nothing ever

* The statue of James II. behind Whitehall.

gave me a juster estimate of the events of life or of our own insignificance. Where are now the personages who made the world echo with their deeds? Time has made one step and the face of the earth has been changed.

"I searched in my travels for those artists and divine poets who sung on their lyres the praises of the gods, and the happiness of the nations that honour the laws, religion, and the grave.

"These men are unquestionably of divine race: they inherit the only talent which cannot be disputed as being a gift sent down from Heaven upon the Earth. Their life is at once simple and sublime: they celebrate the gods with golden songs, yet they are the most primitive of men: they talk like immortal beings or like infancy: they expound the laws of the universe, without understanding the most ordinary affairs of life: their ideas upon death are full of wonders, yet they die peacefully as children newly born.

"On the hills of Caledonia, the last bard who has been heard among these deserts sung to me the poems with which a hero long ago consoled his old age. We were seated on four stones covered with moss; a torrent rolled at our feet: the wild deer browzed at a distance among the ruins of a tower, and the winds of the sea whistled over the heathy tracts of Cona. Now the Christian Religion also born among high mountains has planted her cross on the hills of the heroes of Morven, and touched the harp of David on the borders of the same torrent where Ossian awoke his melancholy numbers. As pacific as the divinities of Selma were warlike, she guards a flock where Fingal fought, and has stationed angels of peace among the mists formerly peopled by phantoms of blood.

"The ancient and smiling Italy offered to my view her crowds of master-pieces. With what a holy and poetical awe I wandered through her vast edifices, which the arts have

consecrated to religion! What labyrinths of columns! What a succession of arches and vaults! How sweet too are those sounds which are heard about their domes, like the echoes of the ocean-waves, or the murmurs of the wind among forests, or the voice of God in his temple! The architect builds up, as it were, the ideas of the poet, and brings them in contact with our senses.

"Yet what had I learnt after all this fatigue? Nothing certain among the ancients, nothing lofty among the moderns. The past and the present are like two unfinished statues: the one has been withdrawn all mutilated from the ruins of past ages, and the other has not yet received its touches of perfection from the future.

"But perhaps my aged friends, and especially you, inhabitants of the desert, are astonished that in the narrative of my travels, I have not once spoken of the monuments of nature?

"One day I climbed to the summit of Etna, a volcano which burns in the midst of an island. I saw the sun rise in the immense horizon beneath me, Sicily diminished to a speck at my feet, and the ocean spread out into endless space. From the height at which I stood, the rivers seemed no wider than the geographical lines traced upon maps: but while my eyes gazed on these objects at one side, on the other yawned the crater of Etna, whose burning entrails I could occasionally descry between the gusts of black vapour rising from its bosom.

"A young man full of passion, seated near the mouth of a volcano, and weeping for mortals whose abodes he could scarcely descry beneath him, is doubtless in your eyes, O venerable men, only an object of scorn: but whatever ye may think of René, this picture is that of his feelings and his existence: it is thus that during the whole of my life, I have had before my eyes a creation at once immense

and imperceptible, and an abyss gaping beside me."

In pronouncing these last words, René was silent, and fell into a sudden reverie. Father Souël regarded him with astonishment, and the blind Sachem, hearing the young man talk no longer, wondered at his silence.

The eyes of René were fixed on a group of Indians who passed gaily along the plain. Suddenly his features melted into tenderness, his eyes filled with tears, and he cried out:

"Happy Savages! Oh why cannot I share in the peace which seems always to attend you! While I was so fruitlessly wandering over many countries, ye, seated tranquilly under your oaks, let your days glide by unnumbered. Your wants were measured by reason, and you arrived far sooner than I at the results of wisdom, like an infant who passes his time between play and slumber. If that melancholy which is engendered by excess of happiness ever seized your souls, you

speedily freed yourselves from the passing sadness, and your gaze, upraised to heaven, searched there tenderly for the unknown Being who pities and protects the poor savage."

Here the voice of René again died away; and the young man leaned his head upon his bosom. Chactas, stretching out his arms through the darkness, and seizing the arm of his son, cried to him in accents of tenderness, "My son! my dear son!" At these words the brother of Amelia recovered himself, and, blushing for his weakness, implored his father to pardon him.

Then spoke the venerable savage: "My young friend, the movements of a heart like thine can never be equal: but moderate that character which has already caused thee so much misery. If thou sufferest more than others from the chances of life, be not astonished: a great soul must contain more sorrows than a mean one. Continue thy story. Thou hast led us over a great part of

Europe; take us now to thy own country. Thou knowest that I have seen France, and what has attached me to it: I should love to hear of the great Chief* who is now no more, and whose superb cabin I have visited. My son, I now only live in the exercise of my memory. An old man, with his recollections, resembles the decrepid oak of our forests; a tree which no longer wears its own foliage, but covers its nakedness with the foreign plants which have grown upon its ancient roots."

The brother of Amelia, calmed by these words, thus resumed the history of his mind: "Alas, my father! I cannot talk of that celebrated age, of which I only saw the conclusion in my childhood, and which no longer existed when I returned to my country. Never was a change more astounding or sudden operated on a nation. From the heights of genius, from respect for religion, from decency

* Louis XIV.

of manners, we suddenly sunk to meanness of spirit, to impiety, and corruption.

"It was thus in vain that I had hoped in my own country to find a charm for that uneasiness, those ardent desires, which had pursued me continually. The study of the world had taught me nothing, and yet I could not enjoy the bliss of ignorance.

"My sister, in a manner inexplicable, seemed to delight in augmenting my *ennui:* she had quitted Paris a few days before my arrival. I wrote to her that it was my intention to rejoin her; but she hastened to reply in order to dissuade me from that project, on the ground of her uncertainty as to what place her affairs might call her. How sad were then my reflections upon friendships which our presence cools, which our absence effaces, which cannot resist misfortune, and still less prosperity!

"I now found myself more isolated in my own country than in a foreign land. I longed to throw myself for a short period into a world

which invited me not, and which knew not my language. My soul, which no passion had yet worn, looked for an object which might attach it; but I found that I always gave more affection than I received. It was neither an elevated language, nor a profound feeling, which was asked from me. I was wholly occupied with reducing my mind to littleness, in order to level it to the condition of society. Treated every where and by all as romantic, ashamed of the part I was playing, and disgusted daily more and more with men and things, I determined to take up my retired abode in a suburb where I might live utterly unknown.

"At first I found some pleasure in this life of obscurity and independence. Unknown I mingled in the crowd—the mighty desert of mankind!

"Often seated in a church but little frequented, I passed whole hours in meditation. I saw poor women come to prostrate them-

selves before the Most High, or sinners kneel at the tribunal of penitence. None left the spot without a serener visage, and the indistinct clamour which was heard without its walls, seemed to be the waves of the passions and storms of the world, which expired at the base of the temple of the Lord. Great God, who hast witnessed my tears as they flowed in that sacred retreat, thou knowest how often I have thrown myself at thy feet, to implore thee to remove from me the weight of existence, or to cast out from me the old man with his deeds! Alas! who has not sometimes felt the necessity of regeneration, of renewing his life at the spring, of strengthening his soul at the fountain of life? Who has not sometimes found himself loaded with the burden of his own corruption, and incapable of doing any thing that is great, just, or noble?

"When the evening came I pursued the road to my retreat, lingering on the bridges to witness the decline of day. The sun, as it lighted

up the vapours of the city, seemed to float slowly in a golden fluid, and to oscillate there like the pendulum of the dial of ages. I then retired to my abode with the night, treading a labyrinth of solitary streets. In gazing at the lights which shone in the abodes of men, I transported myself, in fancy, among the scenes of grief or joy which they illumined, and thought that in all these streets, under all these roofs, I had not one friend. Amidst these reflections the hour would sound slowly from the steeple of the Gothic cathedral, and was echoed in all tones and at all distances from spire to spire. Alas! each hour opens some grave in society, and causes human tears to flow.

"This life, which had at first enchanted me, very soon became insupportable. I was fatigued with the repetition of the same scenes and the same ideas. I began to sound my heart, and to ask myself what I desired? I knew not; but suddenly I fancied that the

forests would be to me a delicious retreat. I was now determined to end in rural exile a career which had scarcely begun, but in which I seemed to have already consumed ages.

"I embraced this project with the ardour which I impart to all my designs. I set off as instantly and warmly to bury myself in a cottage, as I had before gone to make a tour over the world.

"I have been accused of inconstancy in my tastes, of being unable long to enjoy the same chimera, of being a prey to an imagination which hastens to reach the end of its pleasures as if it were wearied with their duration; of passing always beyond the end I might attain. Alas! I seek only for an unknown good, the instinctive relish of which haunts me. Is it my fault if I find every where bounds to my desires, if what I have once grasped ceases thenceforth to be of any value to me? Yet I feel that I love the monotony of the sentiments of life, and if I had still the

folly to believe in happiness, I should seek it in what is habitual.

"Absolute solitude, and the sight of nature, soon plunged me into a state which it is almost impossible to describe. Without parents or friends, almost alone upon the earth, not having yet loved, I felt oppressed with a redundancy of life. Sometimes I would blush suddenly, as I seemed to feel rivers of burnin lava rushing through my heart: sometimes I would utter involuntary screams, and my nights were equally troubled by my waking and my dreams. There wanted something in my heart to fill up the abyss of my existence: I descended into the valley, or I climbed the mountain, calling with all the force of my desires upon the ideal object of my future passion: I embraced her in the winds, I seemed to hear her voice in the murmurs of the rivers: every thing took the form of this phantom, the stars in the heaevns, and even the principle of life in the universe.

"Still this state of alternate calm and trouble, of indigence and of riches, was not destitute of its peculiar charms. One day I amused myself with plucking the leaves from a willow that hung over a brook, and attaching an idea to each leaf as it floated down the stream. A king who fears to lose his crown by a sudden revolution, never felt anguish more lively than mine at each accident that threatened the torn leaves of my bough. O weakness of mortals! O infancy of the human heart which never is matured! Behold to what a degree of puerility our superb reason can descend! And yet how often do men attach their destinies to things as worthless as my willow leaves!

"But how can I express the crowd of fugitive sensations which I experienced in my walks? The sounds produced by the passions in the void of a lonely heart are like the murmur of winds and waters in the silence of a desert: we may feel, but cannot express them.

"The autumn surprised me in the midst of my

indecision; and I entered with transport upon the months of tempest. Sometimes I could have wished to become one of those warriors who are believed to career amid winds, clouds, and phantoms: at others I envied the lot of the shepherd whom I saw warming his hands by the humble fire which he had lit in the woods. I listened to his melancholy songs, and remembered that in all countries the natural tone of humanity is sad, even when it expresses happiness. Our heart is an imperfect instrument, a lyre of which some strings are wanting; which forces us to give the accents of joy in the mood consecrated to sighs.

"During the day I wandered over the great tracts of heath which led into forests. How few were the objects my reveries required! a dried leaf which the wind whirled before me, a cottage from which the smoke ascended through the naked tops of the trees, the moss on the trunk of an oak which trembled at the

breath of the north wind, a solitary rock, or a deserted pool over which the withered rushes bent and murmured The lonely spire, rising far off in the valley, often attracted my eyes, and often would I follow the flight of the birds of passage as they coursed over my head. I figured to myself the unknown shores, the distant climates to which they were bound, and I wished to possess their wings. A secret instinct tormented me: I felt that I was myself but a traveller on the earth, but a voice from heaven seemed to say, 'Man, the season of thy migration is not yet come: wait till the winds of death arise, and then wilt thou take thy flight towards those unknown regions which thy heart longs for.'

"Arise quickly, ye wished-for storms, which are to carry René into the spaces of a new existence! Thus I spoke, as I walked rapidly forward with inflamed visage, and the wind whistling through my hair—feeling neither

the rain nor the sleet, enchanted, tortured, and possessed, as it were, by the demon of my own heart.

"At night, when the north wind shook my cottage, and the rain fell in torrents upon the roof, when through my windows I saw the moon furrowing the heavy masses of clouds like a white vessel ploughing the waves, I felt as if life were redoubled in my heart, as if I had power to create new worlds. Ah! if I had but been able to impart to another the transports I experienced! Oh God, if thou hadst given to me a wife made after my own fancy: if, as to our first parent, thou hadst brought to me an Eve taken from my side.... celestial beauty, how would I have prostrated myself before thee, and then, taking thee in my arms, I would have implored the Eternal to bestow upon thee the rest of my existence.

"Alas! I was alone; alone upon the earth. A secret languor seized my frame. The disgust of life which I had felt from my in-

fancy now returned with new force Very soon my heart refused to furnish food to my thoughts, and I only perceived that I existed from the ennui that devoured me.

"I struggled some time against my disease, but I was not sufficiently in earnest, nor did I feel a resolution to conquer it. At last, finding no remedy to the strange wounds of my heart, which were every where yet no where, I determined on bidding farewell to life.

"Priest of the Most High, who now hearest me, pardon a wretch whom Heaven had almost deprived of reason. I was full of religion, yet I reasoned like an infidel: my heart loved God, and my spirit disregarded him: my conduct, my discourse, my sentiments, my thoughts, were only contradictions, darkness, lies! But does man almays know what he wants? is he always sure even of what he thinks?

"Every thing had disappointed—eluded me: friendship, the world, solitude! I had tried

all, and found all vanity. Discarded by Amelia, and repulsed by society, when even solitude had failed to give me rest, what remained for me? It was the last plank on which I hoped to save myself, and I felt this now sink beneath me into the waters!

"Decided as I was to rid myself of the burden of life, I yet resolved to infuse all my reason into this wild act. Nothing urged me to hasten the deed: I therefore did not fix the moment of my departure, that I might slowly relish the last moments of existence, and collect all my strength of mind, like that famous ancient, to feel the escape of my soul.

"However, I thought it right to make some arrangements relative to my property, and I was forced to write to Amelia. There escaped from my pen some complaints of her forgetfulness of me, and I doubtless suffered my sister to see the melancholy which had gradu-

ally seized upon my heart. I thought, however, that I had sufficiently dissembled my secret, but she, accustomed to read all the secrets of my soul, easily divined the whole of it. She was alarmed at the constrained tone of my letter, and at the questions I put to her on subjects which had never, till then, engaged my attention. Instead of replying to me, she surprised me by her presence.

"In order to judge of what my grief must have afterwards been, and of what nature were my first transports on seeing Amelia, you must remember that she was the only person I had ever loved, and that all my sentiments were concentrated in her, with the sweet recollections of my childhood. I accordingly received Amelia with a sort of ecstasy of heart. It was so long since I had seen any one who could understand me, and before whom I could open my heart!

"Amelia, throwing herself into my arms, said to me: 'You wish to die and leave your sis-

ter living! Ungrateful brother, do you doubt her affection for you? Seek not to explain nor to excuse yourself—I know all: I guessed all, as if I had been ever with you. Would you endeavour to deceive me—*me* who witnessed the birth of your first sentiments? All this springs from your unhappy disposition, your disgust of the world, your injustice. Swear, even while I press you to my heart, swear that this is the last time that you will give yourself up to such follies: make a vow before me that you will never lift your hand against your own life.'

"In pronouncing these words, Amelia looked at me with an air of tenderness and compassion, and covered my forehead with kisses; she seemed almost a mother, she was even something more: alas! my heart expanded once more to joy; like an infant, I only asked to be consoled; I yielded to the empire of Amelia; she exacted a solemn vow, which I

made without hesitation, never believing that thenceforward I could be unhappy.

"We lived more than a month in accustoming ourselves to the enchantment of being together. In the morning, when, instead of being alone, I heard the voice of my sister, my heart trembled with joy and happiness. Amelia had received from nature something divine; her soul had the same innocent graces as her body: the sweetness of her sentiments was excessive: her whole soul was compounded of goodness and loveliness, mingled with a slight tinge of melancholy; it might have been said that her heart, thoughts, and voice, sighed as if in concert: she had all the timidity and love of a woman, with the purity and melody of an angel.

"The moment was now come when I was to expiate all my inconsistencies. In my madness I had even gone the length of wishing for a misfortune, in order to have at least a real motive of suffering: a fearful wish

which God, in his anger, has too abundantly granted!

"What am I now about to tell you, oh my friends! look at those tears that are streaming from my eyes. Can I —— But a few days ago, nothing could have extorted the secret from me.—— Now all is over!

"Yet, venerable men, let this story be for ever buried in silence: remember that it was told to you under the trees of the desert.

"The winter was near its close when I saw that Amelia was losing the health and the quiet which she was restoring to me. She grew thin: her eyes became hollow, her walk was languid, her voice broken. One day I surprised her in tears at the foot of a crucifix. The world, solitude, my absence, my presence, the day, the night—every thing disturbed her. Involuntary sighs expired on her lips: sometimes she supported without fatigue great exertion: at others she could hardly walk: she took up, and laid down her work;

opened a book without being able to read in it, began a phrase which she did not finish, melted suddenly into tears, and withdrew to pray.

"In vain I endeavoured to discover her secret; when I questioned her, pressing her in my arms, she would reply with a smile, that, like me, she did not know what ailed her.

"Three months passed away thus, and her condition daily grew worse. A mysterious correspondence seemed to me to be the cause of her tears: for she seemed always more tranquil or more agitated, according to the letters she received. At length one morning, when the hour at which we breakfasted together had been some time past, I went up to her room: I knocked: no one answered; I half-opened the door, and found no one in the apartment. I saw on the mantel-piece a packet addressed to me. I seized it with a trembling

hand: I opened it, and read the following letter, which I preserve in order to shut out from me in future every feeling of joy:

"*To René.*

"Heaven is witness, my dear brother, that I would a thousand times sacrifice my own life to spare you a moment's uneasiness: but unfortunately I can do nothing to advance your happiness. You will therefore forgive me for having stolen away from you like a guilty thing: for I could not have resisted your entreaties, yet I was forced to go—my God have pity on me!

"You know, René, that I have always had an inclination for a monastic life, and it is now time for me to follow the inspirations of Heaven. Why have I waited so long? God punishes me now for my delay. I lived for you in the world .... forgive me, I am overcome by my grief at quitting you.

"It is at this moment, my dear brother, that I feel deeply the necessity of those asy-

lums, against which I have often heard you argue. There are misfortunes which for ever separate us from men; and if convents did not exist, whither could unfortunate women flee? I am persuaded that you yourself, my dear brother, would find repose in a religious retreat: earth offers nothing worthy of you.

"I shall not recal to you your oath: I know the value of your word. You swore that you would live for me. Is there any thing more despicable than for ever to meditate upon quitting existence? For a person of your character it is so easy to die! Believe your sister when she says that it is far more difficult to live on.

"But quit, my dear brother, speedily quit your solitude, which suits you not: find some occupation for your mind. I know that you will bitterly laugh at that necessity which obliges you in France to chuse a profession. But do not so despise the experience

and the wisdom of our forefathers. It is far better, my dear René, to follow a little more the ways of men and suffer a little less.

"Perhaps you may find in marriage a solace for your sufferings. A wife and children would fill up your time. And what woman is there who would not seek to render you happy? The ardour of your soul, the beauty of your genius, your impassioned and noble air, your look, at once so proud and tender . . . . would all assure you of her love and her fidelity. Oh! with what delight would she press you to her heart! How all her looks, all her thoughts, would be fixed upon you, to prevent your slightest sufferings! She would be all love, all innocence before you: you would fancy you had recovered a sister.

"I am going to the convent of ——. That monastery built on the sea shore, suits the tone of my soul. In the night, from the depths of my cell, I shall hear the murmurs of the waves as they bathe the walls of the convent: I shall

think of my walks with you amidst the woods, when we used to fancy we heard the noise of ocean in the tops of the waving pines. Beloved companion of my childhood, can it be that I shall see you no more? When scarcely older than yourself, I nursed you in your cradle, and often have we slumbered together. Oh, that the same tomb might one day hold us! But no—I must sleep alone under the cold marble of that sanctuary where repose those virgins that have never loved.

"I know not whether you will be able to read these lines, half effaced by my tears. But after all, my brother, a little later or a little sooner, must we not have been separated? What need have I to talk to you of the uncertainty and the worthlessness of life? You remember young M———, who was shipwrecked off the Isle of France. When you received his last letter, some months after his death, and when his mortal part no longer existed—at the very time when you began to wear

mourning for him here, his friends had cast it off in India. What then is man, when his memory perishes so quickly? Some of his friends have scarcely heard of his death when the rest regret it no longer! Oh dear—too dear—René, will the remembrance of me be as easily effaced from your heart? Oh, my brother, if I tear myself from you in this world, it is only that I may not be divided from you in eternity!

"P. S. I add to this letter the assignment of all my worldly goods to you: I hope you will not refuse that mark of my affection.

AMELIA."

"If a thunderbolt had fallen at my feet it could not have caused me more alarm than this letter. What secret did Amelia wish to hide from me? What had so suddenly forced her to embrace the life of a nun? Had she re-attached me to existence by the charms of friendship, only to leave me suddenly alone? Oh why did she come to dissuade me from my design? A movement of pity had hardly

called her to my side, when, weary of the painful duty, she hastened to forsake a wretch who possessed nothing but her upon the earth. She thought she had completed her duty when she had saved me from suicide! Such were my complaints. Then I would cry, "Ungrateful Amelia, if thou hadst been in my place, if like me thou hadst been lost in the void of thy days, ah! thou wouldst not have been abandoned by thy brother."

"Nevertheless, on re-perusing the letter, I found in it a vein of melancholy and tenderness which quite melted my heart. Suddenly I conceived an idea which gave me some hope. I imagined that Amelia had perhaps felt a passion for some person which she durst not avow. This suspicion seemed to account for her melancholy, her mysterious correspondence, and the impassioned tone which breathed through her letters. I wrote to her immediately to entreat her to open to me her whole heart.

"She speedily replied, but she did not tell me her secret: she merely said that she had obtained a dispensation from the usual noviciate, and that she was about to pronounce her vows.

"I was angry at her obstinacy, at the mystery she preserved, and at her want of confidence in my friendship.

"After some hesitation as to the conduct I was to pursue, I resolved to go to B———, to make a last effort with my sister. The spot on which I had been born lay in my way thither. When I saw the woods among which I had passed the only happy moments of my life, I could not restrain my tears, and it was impossible for me to resist the temptation of bidding them an eternal farewell.

"My eldest brother had sold the paternal estate, and the new proprietor did not live upon it. I reached the mansion through the long avenue of firs: I traversed the deserted courtyards: I gazed at the shut or half-broken windows, the thistles which grew along the

walls, the leaves which strewed the door-sills, and the empty vestibule where I had so often seen my father and his faithful servants. The steps were covered with moss, and the yellow wallflower was growing between the shaking and disjointed stones. An unknown attendant rudely opened the door. I hesitated to cross the threshold, on which the man cried: 'What! are you going to behave like the stranger that came here a few days ago? When she was about to enter the house she fainted, and I was obliged to carry her to her coach.' It was easy for me to recognise this *stranger:* like me she had come to this place of tears and recollections!

"Covering my eyes for a moment with my handkerchief, I entered the home of my ancestors. I walked through the resounding apartments, which only echoed back my steps. The rooms were but half lighted by the faint gleam that came through the closed shutters: I visited that chamber where my mother had

died in giving me birth, that of my father, that where I had been cradled, and, finally, that where friendship had hallowed my first vows on the bosom of my sister. Every room was denuded, and the spider wove his web in the deserted beds. I left the house precipitately, and walked onwards rapidly, without venturing to turn back my eyes. How sweet, but how transitory, are the hours which brothers and sisters pass in childhood, under the wing of their parents! The families of man are but of a day: the breath of God scatters them like smoke. Scarcely does the son know his father, or the father the son, the brother his sister, or the sister her brother! The oak sees its acorns shoot up around it; but it is not thus with the children of men!

"On arriving at B—— I went to the convent, and requested that I might see my sister. I was told that she refused to see any one. I wrote to her. She replied, that being on the point of devoting herself to God, it was not

right for her to bestow a thought upon the world, and that if I loved her, I would avoid overwhelming her with my griefs. She added: 'Nevertheless, if it is your intention to be present at my profession, I should wish you to act the part of father; this office alone is worthy of your courage and our friendship, and the only one which can give me peace.'

"Her cold firmness opposed to the ardour of my friendship, threw me into violent transports. Sometimes I resolved to return home; and then I determined to remain only to interrupt the sacrifice. The devil even suggested to me the idea of stabbing myself in the church, and mingling my last sighs with the vows which would part me from my sister. The superior of the convent informed me that there was a seat prepared for me in the chancel, and invited me to attend the ceremony, which was to take place on the following day.

At dawn I heard the first sounds of the bells. About ten o'clock, in a sort of agony,

I forced myself to the monastery. Nothing can be more tragic than to be present at such a spectacle; nothing more melancholy than to survive it.

"An immense crowd filled the church. I was conducted to my seat in the chancel, and sunk on my knees, scarcely knowing where I was, or what I was doing. The priest was already at the altar: suddenly the mysterious grate opened, and Amelia came forth, adorned with all the pomp of this world. She was so beautiful, and wore in her aspect such an air of divinity, that she excited a general feeling of surprise and admiration. Overcome by the glorious grief of the saint and the grandeur of religion, all my projects of violence fled: my strength forsook me; I felt myself held fast by an almighty hand, and instead of threats and blasphemies, my heart uttered only praises and groans of humiliation.

"Amelia placed herself under the canopy. The sacrifice began by torch-light, amidst

flowers and perfumes, to render the offering agreeable. At the offertory the priest took off his ornaments, and, wearing only a linen tunic, mounted the pulpit, and, in a simple and pathetic discourse, painted the happiness of the Virgin who consecrates herself to the Lord. When he pronounced these words: 'She is like the incense which the fire consumes,' a general calm, mingled with celestial odours, seemed to be diffused through the auditory; all felt as if under the shelter of the wings of the mystic dove, and fancied they beheld angels descending on the altar, and remounting to heaven with perfumes and wreaths.

"The priest ended his discourse, put on his robes, and continued the sacrifice. Amelia, supported by two young nuns, knelt down on the lowest step of the altar. I was then summoned to perform my paternal duties. On hearing the sound of my faltering steps in the sanctuary, Amelia nearly fainted. I

was placed by the side of the priest that I might present to him the scissars. At this moment I felt all my fury renewed; and my rage was about to break forth, when Amelia, resuming courage, gave me a look so full of grief and reproach, that I was calmed in a moment. Religion triumphed. My sister took advantage of my feelings: she boldly held forth her head. Her beautiful hair fell in heaps beneath the sacred steel. A long muslin robe was assumed instead of the ornaments she had worn; but she looked no less touching for the change: her forehead was bound by a linen band, and the mysterious veil, the double sign of virginity and religion, covered her despoiled head. Never did she appear to me so beautiful. The eyes of the penitent were fixed upon the dust of this world, and her soul was in heaven.

Amelia, however, had not yet pronounced the vows: and in order to die to the world, it was necessary that she should pass through

the tomb. My sister lay down upon the marble: a pall was spread over her, and four torches burnt at the four corners. The priest in his stole, with the book in his hands, began the funeral service: young virgins continued it. O joys of religion, how great ye are, but how terrible! I was forced to kneel beside this mournful shew. Suddenly a confused murmur was heard from beneath the sepulchral veil: I bent down, and these terrible words (which I alone was meant to hear) struck upon my ear: 'God of mercy, grant that I may never rise from this funeral couch; and pour out all thy blessings upon my brother, who has never shared my criminal passion!'

"At these words the fearful truth flashed upon me: my reason wandered, I fell upon the pall I pressed my sister in my arms, and cried out: 'Chaste spouse of Jesus Christ, receive my last embraces across the gulph

of death and the depths of eternity which already separate thee and thy brother! I

"This action, my words, my tears, disturbed the ceremony: the priest paused, the nuns shut the grate, the crowd pressed up to the altar: I was carried away insensible. How little obligation I felt to those who recalled me to life! I learnt, on recovering, that the sacrifice had been completed, and that my sister had been seized with a violent fever. She intreated that I would not seek to see her. Oh misery! that a sister should dread to speak to a brother—a brother dread to speak to a sister! I quitted the monastery, as if it had been that place of expiation where flames purify us for heaven, where we endure all the sufferings of hell except the loss of hope.

"We may find strength in ourselves against a personal misfortune; but to become the involuntary cause of the unhappiness of another, is altogether insupportable. Informed as I now

was of the cause of the sufferings of my sister, I easily judged what they must have been. I now needed no explanation of several things which I could not previously comprehend: that mixture of joy and sorrow which Amelia had shewn at the moment of my departure; the care which she took to shun me on my return, and again the weakness which so long withheld her from entering the monastery; doubtless the unhappy girl flattered herself with the hope of overcoming her passion. Her projected retirement from the world, her dispensation from the noviciate, her disposal of her fortune in my favour, had in all probability occasioned the secret correspondence which had misled me.

"Oh my friends, I knew then what it was to shed tears for sufferings that were not imaginary! My passions, so long without an object, threw themselves with fury upon this their first prey. I felt even a sort of unexpected satisfaction in the fulness of my grief,

and I discovered, with a secret feeling of joy, that pain is not so easily exhausted as pleasure.

"I had wished to quit the world before the time of the Most High; it was a crime; God had sent Amelia at once to save and to punish me. Thus it is that every criminal thought and action brings with it misery and punishment. Amelia had implored me to live, and I ought not to have aggravated her sufferings. Now (how strange!) I did not wish to die when I was really unhappy. My misfortunes had become an occupation, which filled up all my days, so naturally is my heart composed of *ennui* and misery.

"I then took suddenly a new resolution; I determined on quitting Europe for America. At that very time a fleet was preparing to quit the harbour of B—— for Lousiana; I agreed for my passage with one of the captains. I acquainted Amelia with my intentions, and prepared for my voyage.

"My sister had approached the gates of death, but God, who designed for her the freshest palms of his virgins, did not yet call her to himself. Again entering the dangerous path of life, the heroine, bending under the cross, advanced courageously to meet her sufferings, viewing only her triumph in the combat, and finding in the excess of anguish excess of glory.

"The sale of the little property which remained to me, and which I gave up to my brother, the long preparations of a voyage, with contrary winds, detained us a long time in the harbour. I went daily to make inquiries relative to Amelia, and I always returned with new motives for pity and admiration.

"I wandered incessantly about the monastery, which was built on the sea-shore. I often saw at a little grated window, which looked out upon the beach, a nun seated in a pensive attitude. She seemed to gaze upon the ocean, where a vessel might now

and then be seen sailing, perhaps to the extremities of the earth. Often by the light of the moon have I seen the same nun at the bars of the same window, engaged in contemplating the sea, illumined by that pale planet, and seeming to listen to the sound of the waves as they broke sadly on the solitary shores.

"I fancy that I still hear the bell which in the night summoned the nuns to vigils and to prayer. While it slowly sounded on the air, and the virgins advanced in silence to the altar of the Almighty, I would run to the monastery, and there, alone beneath the walls, I heard in holy extacy the last sounds of their hymns, as they mingled under the vaults of the chapel with the feeble hush of the waves.

"I know not how all this, which might have been supposed to nourish my sorrows, on the contrary, blunted their anguish. My tears flowed with less bitterness when I shed

them to the winds and on the rocks. Even my grief, from its singular nature, carried with it a sort of remedy; we enjoy all that is uncommon, even when it is a misfortune. I even almost conceived a hope that my sister might in turn become less unhappy.

"A letter which I received from her before my departure seemed to confirm me in this notion. Amelia sympathized tenderly with my sufferings, and assured me that time had diminished her own. "I do not yet despair of happiness," she said. "Even the excess of the sacrifice, now that it is consummated, serves to give me some repose. The simplicity of my sisters, the purity of their desires, and the regularity of their lives, shed balm upon my days. When I hear the storms howl, and the sea-bird flap his wings against my window, I, like a poor dove, devoted to heaven, think of my happiness in finding a shelter from the tempest. This is the holy mountain, from the top of which are heard the

last sounds of earth, and the first concerts of the skies. It is here that religion sweetly deceives the soul of feeling; for the most burning love it substitutes a warmth of chastity, in which the lover and the virgin are united. It purifies our sighs, it changes a perishable flame into one everlasting; it mingles divinely its calm and its innocence with those remains of the troubles and pleasures of a heart that longs for repose, and of a life which is about to close."

"I know not what Heaven reserves for me, or whether it wished to warn me that storms would for ever accompany my paths. Orders were given for the departure of the fleet, several vessels were ready to start about sunset, but I had arranged so as to pass the last night on shore, in order to write my last farewell letter to Amelia. About midnight, while thus occupied, and while moisteniug the paper with my tears, the sound of a tempest came upon mine ear. I listened, and through the

storm I heard the sound of alarm-guns mingled with the clang of the clock of the monastery. I flew to the solitary beach; but nothing could be heard but the moaning of the waves: I sat down upon a rock. On one side of me lay spread the glittering waves, on the other the dark walls of the monastery, were indistinctly seen against the sky. A light appeared at the grated window. Was it thou, O, my Amelia, who, prostrate at the foot of the cross, didst pray to the God of tempests for thy unhappy brother? The storm on the waves and calm in thy retreat; men dashed upon the rocks in the neighbourhood of that asylum which no trouble could enter; infinity beyond the walls of a cell; the moving lights of the vessels, and the immoveable pharos of the convent; the uncertain destiny of the navigator; the vestal who knows in a single day all her future existence: on the other hand, a soul like thine, Amelia, stormy as the ocean, a shipwreck far more fearful than the mari-

ner's! . . . . . . all this picture is deeply engraved in my memory! Sun of this new heaven, which art now witness to my tears, echo of the American shores, which repeatest the accents of René, it was on the day following this terrible night that, leaning over the side of my vessel, I saw my native land disappear for ever! I gazed for a long time at the last waving of the trees which grew on the shores of my country, and at the spires of the monastery lessening in the horizon."

When René had finished the recital of this history, he drew a paper from his bosom, and gave it to Father Souël; then throwing himself into the arms of Chactas, and stifling his groans, he allowed the missionary to read the letter with which he had presented him.

It was from the Abbess of . . . , and contained the detail of the last moments of Sister Amelia, who had died a martyr to her zeal and charity, while attending some of her companions, who had been attacked with a

contagious disorder. The whole community was inconsolable, for Amelia was regarded by all as a saint. The Abbess added, that during the thirty years she had presided over the monastery, she had never seen a nun of a disposition so sweet and equal, nor one who rejoiced more at quitting the tribulations of life.

Chactas pressed René to his bosom and wept. "My son," said he, "I wish Father Aubry were here: he was wont to draw from his own heart a peace which seemed to allay the storms of the mind: it was like the moon in a gloomy night; the clouds as they drifted could not divert it from its course, when, pure and unchangeable, it advances tranquilly through the midst of them. Alas, as for me, every thing disturbs, yet attracts me!"

Hitherto Father Souël, without uttering a word, had listened with an austere air to the story of René. He bore in his bosom a compassionate heart, but he assumed an exterior

of severity: the sensibility of the other Sachem made him thus break silence:

"Nothing," said he to the brother of Amelia, "nothing do I see in this story to merit the pity which you have met with here. I behold in you a young man filled with fancies, whom every thing disgusts, and who withdraws from the duties of society to indulge in fruitless reveries. A man is not a superior being because he looks on the world with a jaundiced eye. We never hate men or life, but when we do not see far enough into them. Cast your looks a little farther, and you will speedily be convinced, that all those evils of which you complain are nullities. But how shameful is it for a man to be unable to glance at a real evil without blushing for it! All the purity, virtue, religion—even the crown of holiness—scarcely render tolerable the idea of your griefs. Your sister has expiated her fault: but if I must here express my opinion, I should say that I fear,

lest by a terrible justice, a voice coming from the tomb, may have troubled your heart in its turn. What do you here in the midst of forests, consuming your days and neglecting your duties? You will tell me that saints have buried themselves in deserts. But they dwell there with their tears, and spend in extinguishing their passions the time which you employ perhaps in encouraging your's. Presumptuous youth, who hast dared to think that man is sufficient to himself! Solitude is injurious to those who live not there with God: it redoubles the strength of the soul, while it removes all opportunities for its exertion. Whoever has received any powers, ought to use them for the service of his equals: if he leaves them unemployed, he is first punished by secret misery, and, sooner or later, by a fearful chastisement."

Troubled at these words, René lifted up his humbled head from the breast of Chactas. The blind Sachem smiled; and this smile of

the lips, which had no answering reply from the eyes, had something in its air mysterious and celestial. "My son," said the aged lover of Atala, "he speaks to us severely: he corrects at once both the old and the young; and he is right. Yes, you must renounce this extraordinary life, which is only full of cares: there is no happiness but in the common ways of existence.

"One day the Meschacebé, near its source, complained of being only a limpid rivulet. It asked for snows from the mountains, and waters from the torrents, and rain from the winds; and, having obtained them, it broke banks, and laid waste its beautiful shores. The proud stream was at first vain of its powers: but seeing that all became desolate on its way, that it flowed on abandoned to solitude, and that its waters were ever troubled, it regretted the humble bed which nature had first formed for it, the birds, the flowers, the trees, and the streams, which had formerly

been the modest companions of its peaceful meanders."

Chactas ceased to speak, when the cry of the flamingo was heard from the reeds of the Meschacebé, announcing a storm at mid-day. The three friends directed their steps to their huts: René walked in silence between the Missionary, who was praying, and the blind Sachem, who was feeling for his way.

END OF VOL. II.

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WORKS OF THE

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